

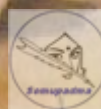
CHANDAMAMA

MARCH 1986

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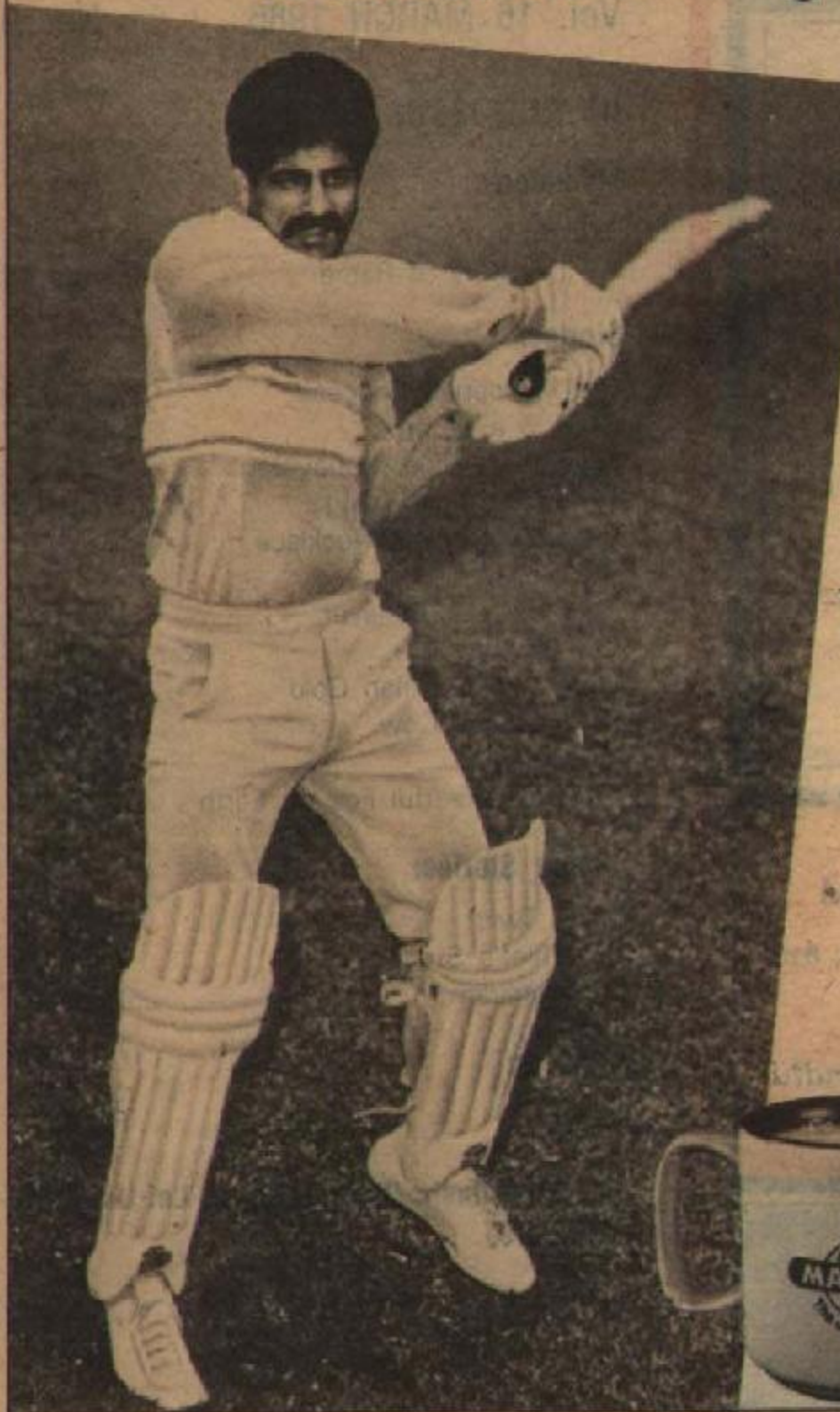
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- *More Gold! In the feature on Better English.*
- *An educative legend of India.*
- *Story of the famous Srirangam temple through pictures*
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Thoughts to be Treasured

It is weakness which breeds fear, and fear breeds distrust.

—Mahatma Gandhi

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Vol. 16 MARCH 1986

No. 9

IN THIS ISSUE

Mythology:

The Bow of Siva
in the Story of Rama ...Page 45

Stories:

The Kidnapped Princess ...Page 11

Wise in a Month! ...Page 23

Adventures of a Money-Bag ...Page 27

Saving the Last Thing ...Page 30

The Jewel in the Necklace ...Page 31

The Believer
and the Non-Believer ...Page 39

The Birthday Gift ...Page 49

More valuable than Gold ...Page 53

The Fearless Cow ...Page 54

A Problem ...Page 57

The Most Fearful Fox on Earth ...Page 58

Picture Stories:

Oliver Twist ...Page 19

The Thief's Strategy ...Page 26

Chidambaram ...Page 35

Features:

Kacha ...Page 17

AND Newsflash, Did You Know, Let Us Know and More





CHANDAMAMA

Controlling Editor: NAGI REDDI

Founder: CHAKRAPANI

FAILURE AND SUCCESS

A reader informs us, "It so happened that I had read a certain item in *Chandamama* just before appearing in a test. My reading helped me and I could answer the question. Had I not read the item, I would have failed and that would have meant a terrible frustration."

Indeed, it was a pleasant coincidence. We congratulate the reader for his "success". But we disapprove of his readiness to feel frustrated had he failed.

The tests that really matter are different. How successfully can one withstand temptations for doing things that one knows to be wrong? How spontaneously can one meet the threats of the wicked? Voluntarily taken up tests within oneself on these issues are the tests that really matter.



मूर्खोऽपि शोभते तावत् सभायां वस्त्रवेष्टितः ।

तावच्च शोभते मूर्खो यावत् किञ्चिन्न भाषते ॥

Mūrkhopi śobhate tāvat sabhāyām vastraveṣṭitaḥ

Tāvacca śobhate mūrkho yāvat kiñcinna bhāṣate

The fool too can shine in an assembly if dressed in a dignified fashion — but he does so only till he has opened his mouth ! — *The Samayochitapadyamalika*

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NEWS FLASH



The Demon in our Midst

About 29,000 people die prematurely every day throughout the world as a direct result of smoking. Many more suffer! This was revealed in the Fourth Convention of the Family Welfare in Calcutta.

Back from Beyond in 80 Minutes!

A 22 year old Chinese lady Yang Baoquan was bicycling to a relative's house when she decided to take a short cut across a frozen river. But the ice suddenly gave way at the centre of the river and she plunged into the freezing waters. On being rescued and put in a hospital her heart totally stopped. But it revived after 80 minutes, a rare record of return from death.




Guard Your Eyes

A seminar on prevention of Child Blindness that took place in Delhi gave out that in India more than 4,000 children lose their eye-sight every year for various causes. Nine million blind, one-third of the blind population of the world, live in India.

The Anti-Gravity Law

The great scientist Galileo asserted that if a feather and a penny were dropped through a vacuum each would fall at the same rate of speed. Is that correct? A team of physicists, according to the *New York Times*, now believe that it is not correct. There is another force that opposes the force of gravity. Deriving their knowledge from a book by a Hungarian scientist, Roland Von Eotvos, they think that the feather would fall faster, because of the anti-gravity law, known as the Hypercharge.





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THE KIDNAPPED PRINCESS

King Virsingh was very sad at heart. He had brought many a match for his extraordinary beautiful daughter, Kiran, but she refused them all. Princess Kiran was so proud that she did not consider any prince worthy of her.

One day, Princess Kiran was enjoying a stroll in her palace garden when, suddenly, as if from nowhere, a band of bandits pounced on her. The chief lifted the princess onto his horse and they fled before any alarm could be raised. It all happened so swiftly that even the guards of the palace were caught napping.

After a hot run the bandits reached the hills deep in a forest. The chief was surrounded by a group of attendants and a few ladies. The chief

told the princess, "Let me introduce myself and my gang to your Majesty. My name is Abhay and my wife's name is Sundari. And my daughter's name is Tarala. Amongst my men my chief adviser is Bhupendra. He will look after all your needs. You can feel safe in these caves for they are well guarded by my men."

"I don't care who you are! I just want to know why I've been brought here, to this wretched place," shouted the princess.

"By bringing you here, I've only fulfilled my dear wife's wish. This morning she told me that she wants a princess as her maid and companion. And risking my life I brought you, capturing you from your own place. Now you are at her service," explained Abhay.





When Abhay was about to go, princess Kiran looked at him for an instant—and she was impressed by his handsome dignified features. His eyes were majestic and his face was bright like an ideal prince's. Then, she looked at his wife, Sundari, who had by then come close to her. She was shocked. The lady looked like an ogress. How on earth could Abhay marry such a creature? Her child too looked like her. Princess Kiran stood dumb.

One of the attendants was so excited that he blurted out saying, "Now that we have a beautiful princess here, I'm sure

our chief will marry her!"

"Stop, you fool! How dare you utter such nonsense? Don't you know that I'm already married? If anyone dares say this once again, I shall behead him," threatened Abhay.

The poor princess started serving Abhay's ugly wife. She was most reluctant to do so—but there was no other go for her. Either she had to serve Sundari or be deprived of food.

Bhupendra, the chief adviser of Abhay one day approached Princess Kiran and said, "I feel sad to see you work so hard. The only way you can be saved from this hardship is to attract Abhay towards you and to induce him to marry you!"

"Hah! you think I'll marry a bandit? There are dozens of princes eager to marry me, if only I choose one!" replied the princess haughtily.

"All right. If you don't wish to marry him, at least try to attract his attention to you so that he may be less harsh towards you," advised Bhupendra.

Princess Kiran felt that what Bhupendra said was quite true. She hoped that she could please the chief. That way she had

some chances of going back to her palace.

One day, she decked herself in beautiful ornaments and wore a dazzling red sari. She went to Abhay and tried to attract his attention. He did not even take note of her. After some time, he remarked, "You look beautiful. But, you would have looked better in a blue sari."

"How do you know?" asked the princess.

"My wife, Sundari, told me so. She has great knowledge of colours and saris and ornaments," replied Abhay.

The princess was very angry to hear the praises of Sundari. But, she kept quiet.

Another day, she dressed herself up in a blue sari and went to meet the chief, singing a song on Sri Krishna.

"You sing well, but, you should sing prayers to Lord Shiva. My wife Sundari is a devotee of Shiva," remarked the chief.

The princess once again swallowed the insult.

Some days passed. One morning, the princess told Abhay, "All your men say that although you are a bandit, no prince can match you in heroism

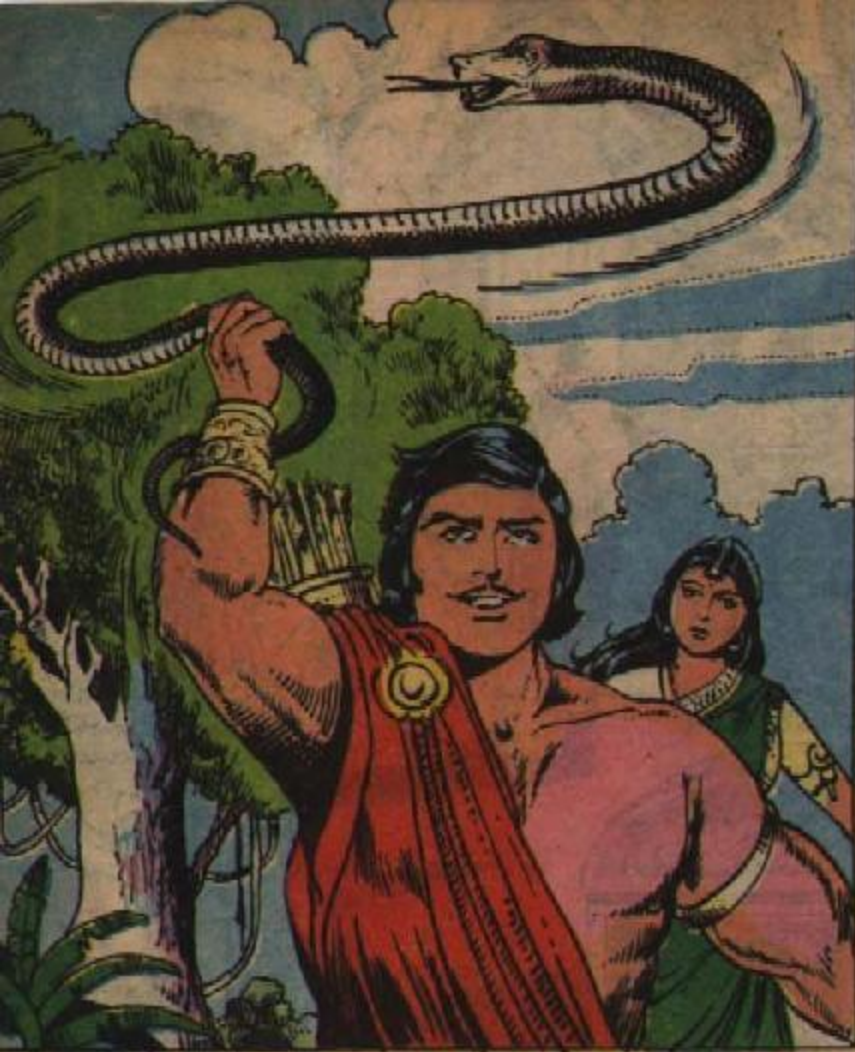


and archery. I would like to witness your skill."

"For that I'll have take you to the forest. But, for taking you with me, you'll have to take the permission of my wife," said Abhay.

The princess felt so overjoyed at the prospect of going out with Abhay that she willingly went to Sundari and said in a sweet tone, "I would like to go out with your husband to the forest in order to witness his skill. I hope you don't mind it. I have no other motive."

"I have full faith and confidence in my husband. You may go out with him," replied Sun-



dari in a calm voice.

Princess Kiran and Abhay went into the forest. There, the bandit chief gave a demonstration of his archery, his strength and his swiftness. The princess was much impressed by his capacity.

"Indeed, you are greater than any prince I've known. In fact you should have been a prince yourself instead of a bandit. How much I wish that you lived in a palace instead of in a cave!" observed the princess.

"Thank you for your appreciation. But, my wife compares me with Arjuna, the great Pandava prince," said Abhay.

Princess Kiran felt sad. Whatever she might say or do seemed to leave no impression on Abhay. His love for Sundari seemed to be so strong that there was no place for her in his heart. After a moment's silence, she said, "Abhay, you know very well that every prince in the region wants to marry me. But, you are the only man who doesn't even utter a word of praise either for my beauty or for my qualities. Your wife, although so ugly, has all your love. What's the reason?" asked the princess, almost in tears.

"I value the inner beauty of a person more than the external beauty. That's why I love my wife, Sundari, who has a great inner beauty," explained Abhay.

Princess Kiran felt dejected. As soon as she returned to the cave, she went to Bhupendra and pleaded, "Please show me a way of getting out of this cave, immediately."

"The only way to go out is to please Sundari," advised Bhupendra. Then he gave a plan to the princess.

Next day, when Sundari was going out of the cave, Bhupendra dropped a banana skin on

her way. She slipped. When she was about to fall flat, Princess Kiran, who was hiding nearby, rushed to her rescue. Sundari was very pleased with her and said, "I'm grateful to you for saving me from a bad fall. In fact, I'll like to reward you by granting anything you want."

"I would like to return to my father. That is the only thing I want you to grant me," said the princess humbly.

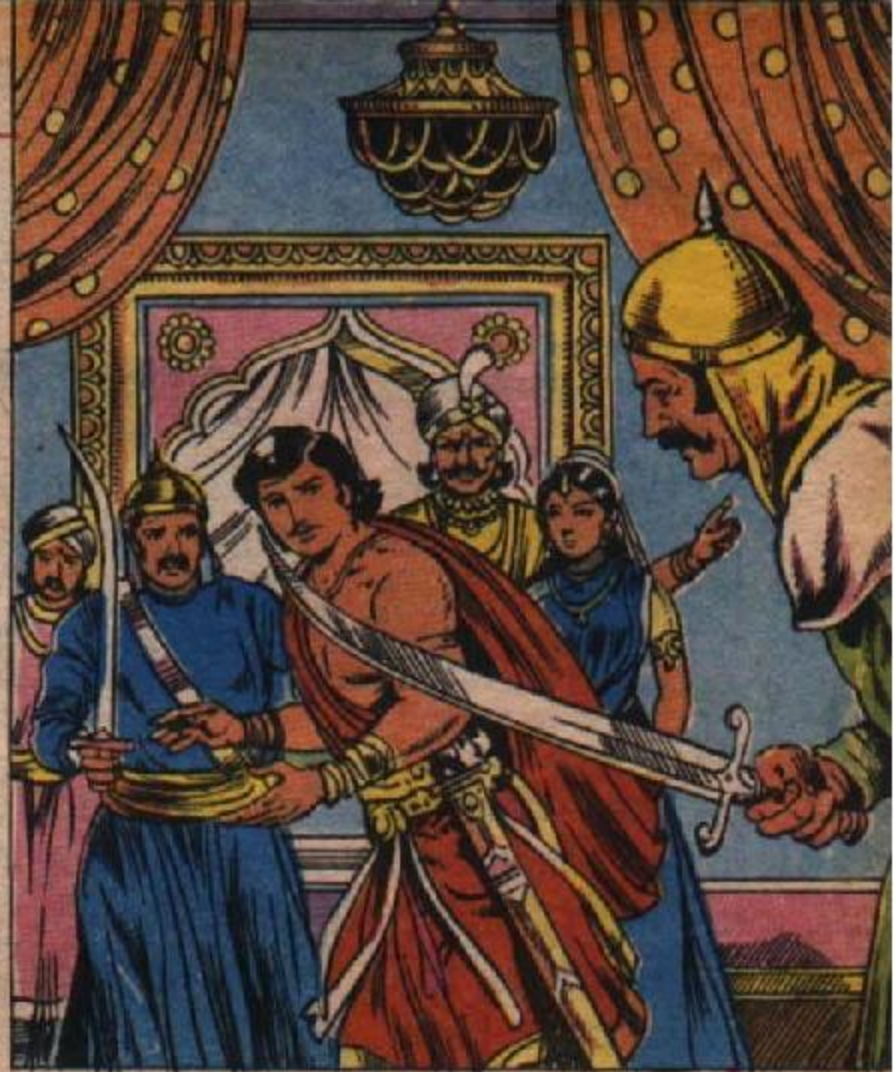
"I am ready to grant you your wish, but, on one condition. You must ask your father, King Virsingh, to pardon my husband for all his acts of robbery and give him shelter in the kingdom," said Sundari.

"All right, I shall surely see to it," said the princess eagerly.

Next morning, Abhay took the princess to the capital. The guards were about to capture him, but the princess ordered them to let him enter the palace.

The king came to greet them. "Maharaj, I am guilty of taking your daughter to my cave where I kept her for some days. For that, I wish to be pardoned. However, I've done her no harm," said Abhay.

"Father, indeed I'm very happy to have lived in Abhay's



cave. In fact, I've realised what a valiant man he is. He is greater than any prince I know," said Princess Kiran.

"That is fine. But now there is a problem. You were kidnapped by him; you lived in his cave. People saw him bringing you here on the very horse he rode. After all this it should be in fitness of things that he marries you. But..." the king stopped.

"Well, father, I should be happy to marry him. But he is already married and..."

Before the princess had proceeded any farther, Abhay and the king burst into a hearty laugh. The princess was sur-



prised.

"My daughter, I'm very happy to learn that you are willing to marry him. Now, Abhay is none other than the Prince of Vijaypur. How obstinate you are. We had to go about the matter in a dramatic fashion!" said the king.

The princess stood speechless, her face marked by both joy and surprise.

"But what about Sundari?"

she asked.

The King and Prince Sursen laughed again.

"Sundari, in real life, is Bhupendra's wife. I had requested that family to help me in the drama," explained Sursen.

The princess blushed. Very soon the date for their marriage was fixed and the rite was performed with great pomp and show.

SPOT THE TEN DIFFERENCES



KACHA

The Determined Seeker of a Secret

Gods and demons were at loggerheads for long. The guru of the demons, Shukracharya, knew how to breathe life into the dead. The secret was a hymn called the Sanjeevani. He resurrected the demons who died.

But the gods did not know the hymn. They sent Kacha, the son of their guru Brihaspati, to extract the knowledge from Shukracharya.

A true guru never refuses to teach one who is eligible for learning. Shukracharya found Kacha intelligent and humble. He accepted him.

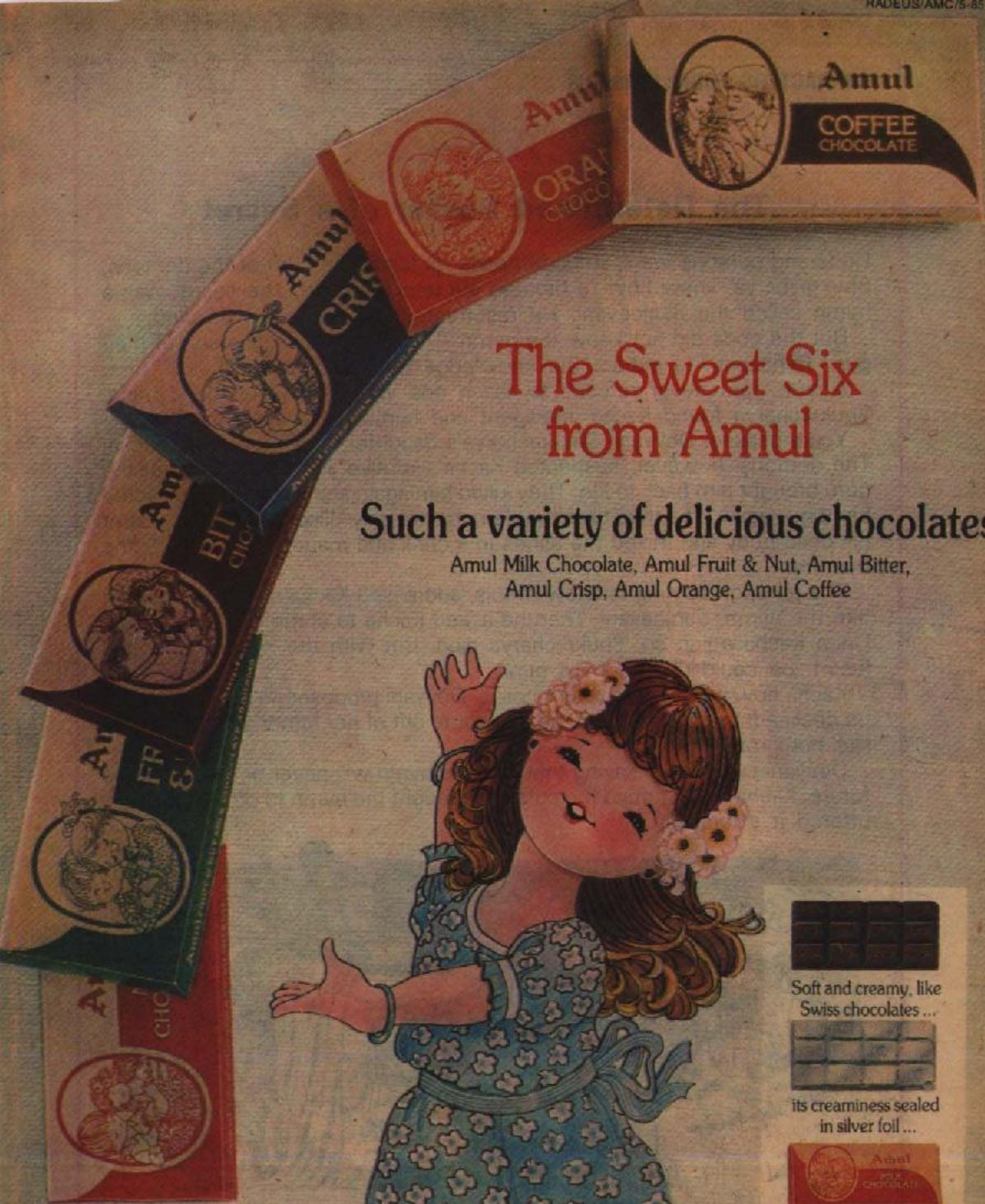
Years passed. Devyani, Shukracharya's daughter, fell in love with Kacha. The demons, however, suspected Kacha's motive and killed him. But the guru brought him back to life. They killed him again and the guru resurrected him once again. The third time the demons not only killed him, but also burnt his dead body and mixed the ashes in a drink and made the guru drink the mixture.

The guru, on coming to know of this, addressed Kacha's spirit and taught him the hymn, Sanjeevani. Then he asked Kacha to come out of his body. Upon Kacha doing so, Shukracharya died. But with the hymn Kacha had learnt, he could resurrect his guru.

Kacha now prepared to return home. Devyani proposed to marry him. But he declined, saying that since he had come out of her father's body, he was like her brother!

Devyani cursed him saying that Kacha's hymn will never be fruitful in the future. Kacha did not mind the curse. He taught the hymn to other gods who uttered it effectively.





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Oliver Twist



Hopes of happiness rise within the breast of Oliver Twist, an orphan. One of his enemies, Bill Sikes, has been tracked to his hiding place by an angry mob, and falls to his death while trying to escape from them.

Stimulated by the sound of people in the house below, which announced that an entrance had been effected, Sikes fastened one end of the rope against the stack of chimneys. It was then, that as he pulled against it, to test its strength, he lost his balance, rolled down the roof and plunged into space...



In the meantime, Oliver's friend, Mr Brownlow, had tracked down Oliver's half brother, Monks. "Why are you here?" enquired Monks of him. "I am here to see justice done," Mr Brownlow said sternly. "In some ways it is a sad task as I was your father's oldest friend." "That may be," replied Monks. "But what is that to do with me?"





"I know something of your shameful story," Mr Brownlow said. "Because your father left with me a picture he had painted of the poor girl who was Oliver's mother. I know also that you have tried to cheat Oliver of his rightful inheritance. Now I wish to know the full details. If you do not tell me, I shall have to go to the law."

Sullenly, Monks told him all there was to be told. Of how his father had separated from his wife, and had then fallen in love with Agnes Flemming, the daughter of a retired naval captain. Oliver Twist had been the result of that union. "Then your father went to Rome, where he died," said Mr Brownlow. "Which is where your part in this disgraceful affair took place..."



It was as Mr Brownlow had surmised. On the death of his father, Monks had gone to Rome, and finding a will leaving the bulk of his estate to Agnes and her then unborn child, had destroyed it. "You will sign a document restoring the inheritance to Oliver," Mr Brownlow said. "When this is done, you may go away wherever you like. I don't want to see your face again."



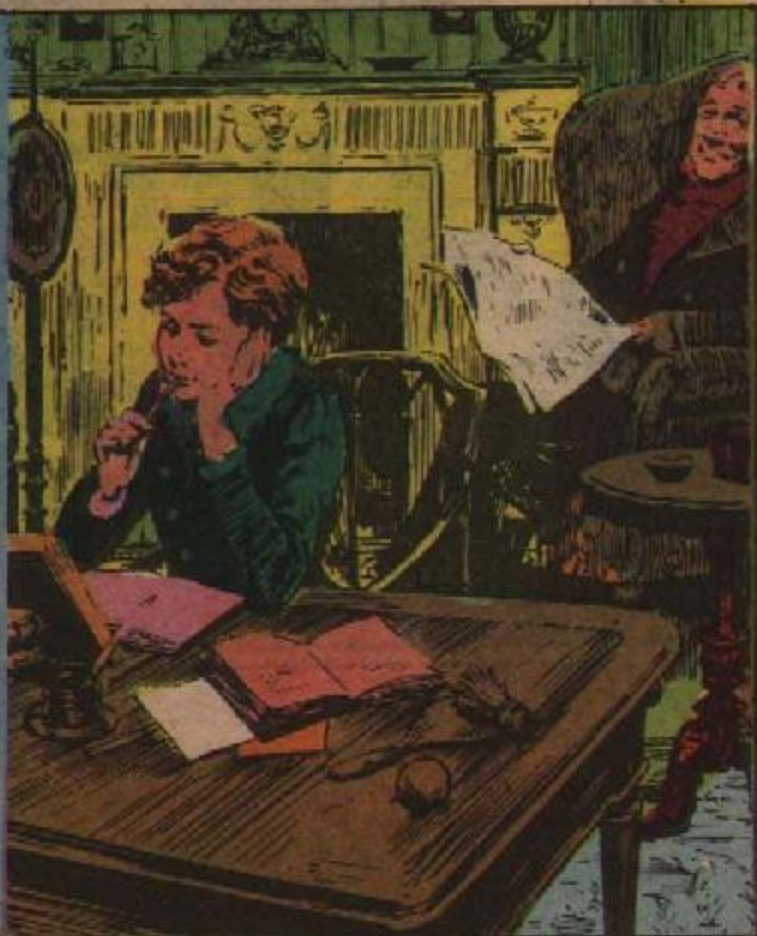
It was a time of retribution for all those who had wronged Oliver Twist. In due course Fagin was apprehended and brought to trial for his crimes. Because of the indirect part he had played in the death of Nancy, he was sentenced to death.

Fagin was taken to the condemned cell, where he had time to ponder on his end. To be hanged by the neck until he was dead. He cowered upon the stone bed within the dreadful walls of Newgate, rocking himself from side to side like some snared beast. In this manner, Fagin spent his last days before he was taken out to face his terrible end.



His young accomplice, Charles Bates, appalled by Sikes' crime, turned to honest ways and in time became a contented young grazier in Northamptonshire. Mr Bumble, the beadle at the workhouse, who had done so much to make Oliver's life an unhappy one, suddenly found himself deprived of his situation, and finally became a pauper himself.

Mr Brownlow adopted Oliver as his own son, and then settled down to the task of filling his young mind with stores of knowledge, and gave to him the great love of a parent, which he had so sorely lacked in the past.



There is but one more thing to be said. Within an old church there stands a white marble tablet, which bears as yet but one word: "AGNES" There is no coffin in the tomb, but Oliver visits it regularly in the company of his other true and trusted friend Rose Maylie.

—THE END

WISE IN A MONTH!

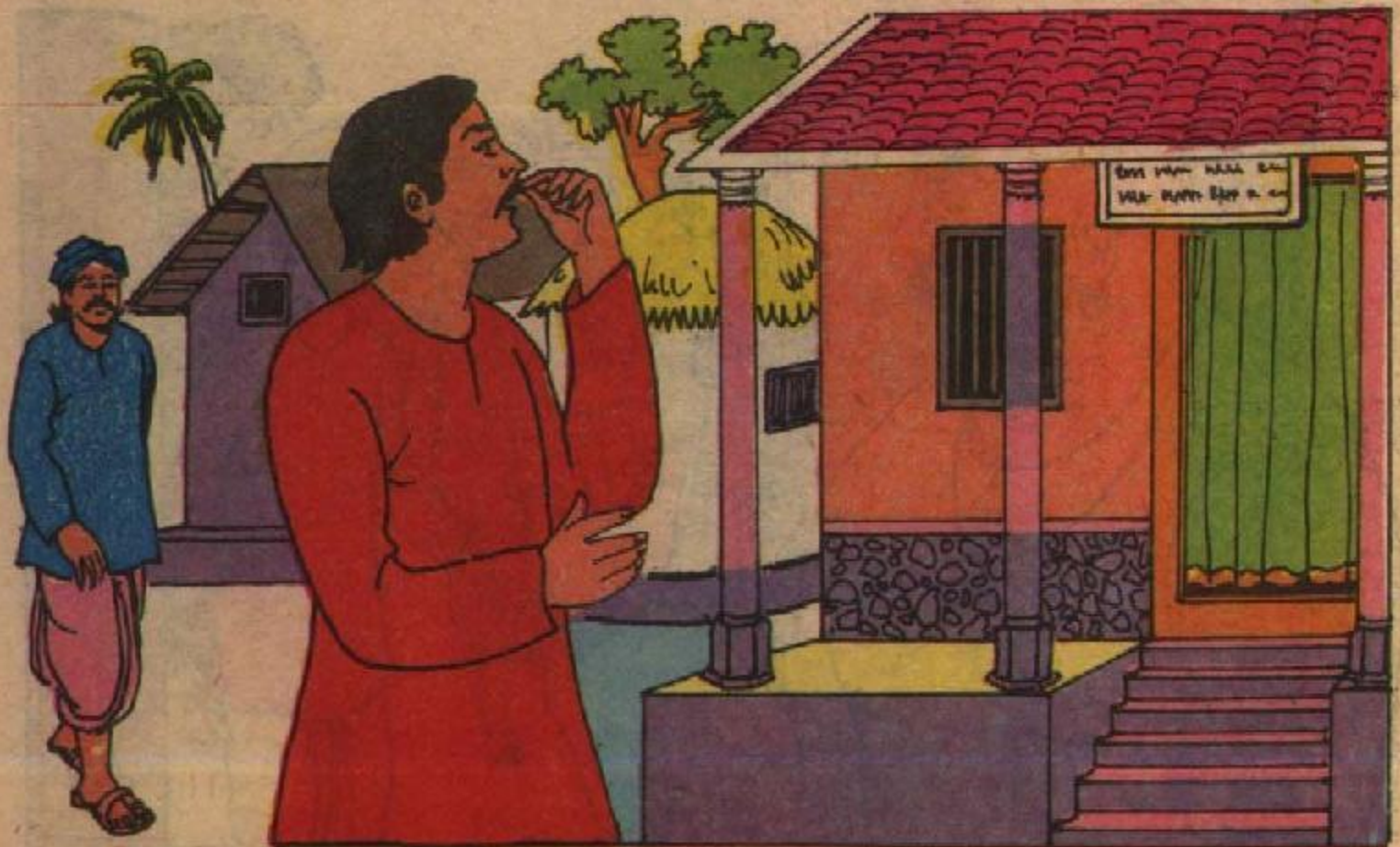
In front of a well-built house hung a signboard which read: "Anyone who dares to twist his moustache standing in front of this house will be considered as one challenging the master of the house to a wrestle!"

Now, the house belonged to the greatest wrestler of the town. His very figure scared people; his moustache, pointed upward at both ends, was the best groomed moustache in the kingdom.

One day a poor man who had

just arrived in town, walking all the way from his distant village in search of some job, read the notice. He was in tattered clothes and he looked famished. However, he had a wee bit of a moustache which he started twisting, right in front of the house.

Passers-by were amazed at the man's audacity. They waited to see what will happen. An hour passed before the wrestler came to know of the poor man's conduct. He came out, roaring



like a lion."

"You have the cheek to challenge me, have you? Are you a fool?"

The villager stopped twisting his moustache and said without any trace of excitement, "Wrestler, sir, I read very slowly. I had read only the first half of the notice when my hands went up to my moustache and began twisting them. It is because, I thought, a noble wrestler like you will write that whoever twists his moustache he will be taken as a friend of yours! However, once having begun to twist my moustache. I thought that to take away my hands would amount to coward-

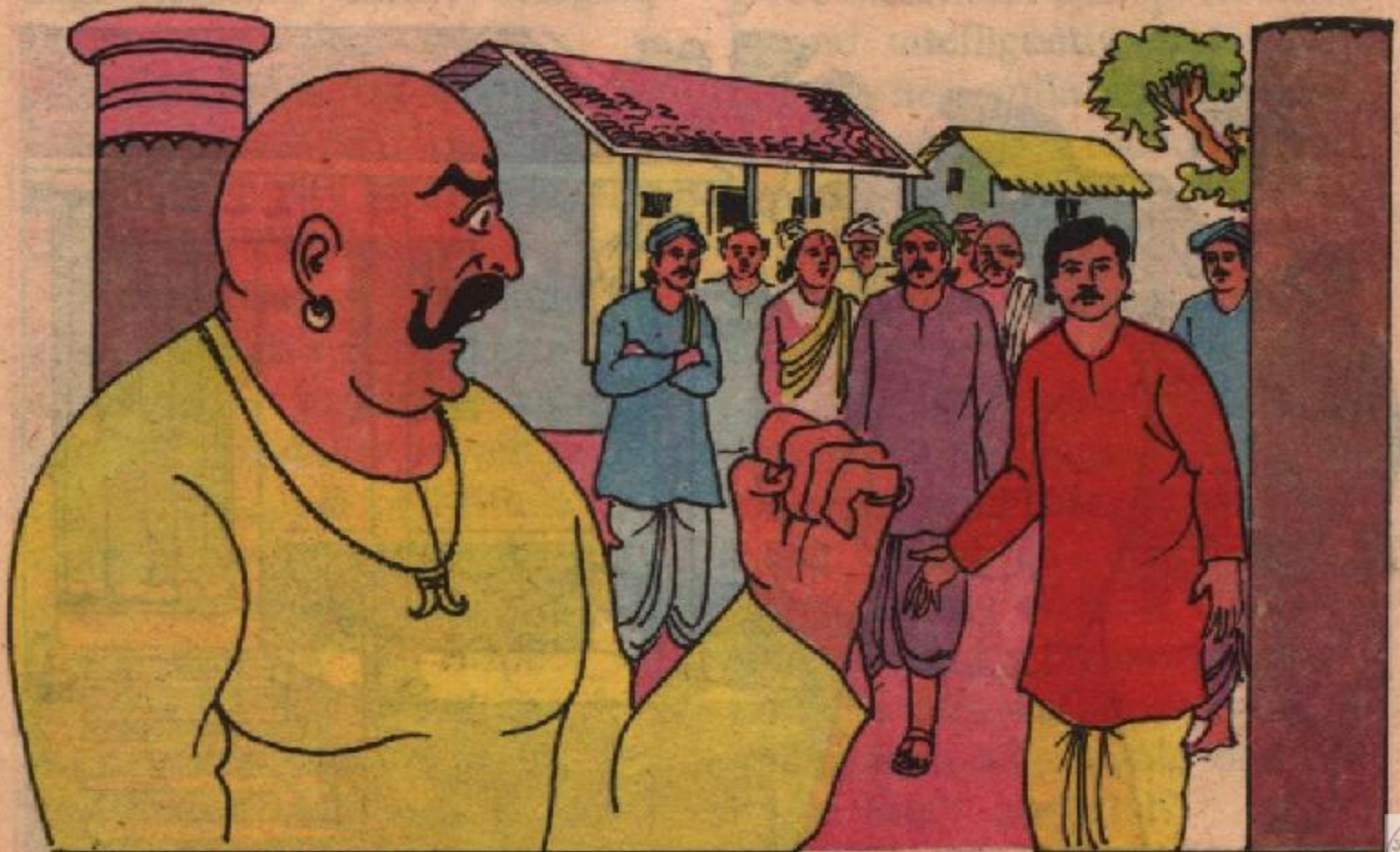
dice. I am willing to wrestle with you, but...". The villager looked at the crowd.

"Why don't you say what you have to say?" demanded the wrestler. Before the crowd, he too must uphold his dignity!

"Wrestler, sir, won't these people laugh at your fighting a weakling like me? I'm willing to fight you if you feed me well for a month."

The wrestler looked at the crowd. The people seemed to appreciate what the villager said.

To save his face, the wrestler announced, "All right, I will feed you for a month! Now, on



this day, at this time, in the coming month, I will wrestle with you before all these people!"

The villager looked very happy. He stayed on as the famous wrestler's guest. The wrestler offered him whatever food he used to eat himself.

The villager would feed well and then roam about in the town looking for a job. In a few days he got one.

His appearance had changed by the time the appointed day for the proposed wrestling match came. Those among the crowd who remembered the date, gathered in front of the wrestler's house on time.

The wrestler came out of his house, ready for the occasion.

The villager was there.

"Are you ready?" asked the wrestler.

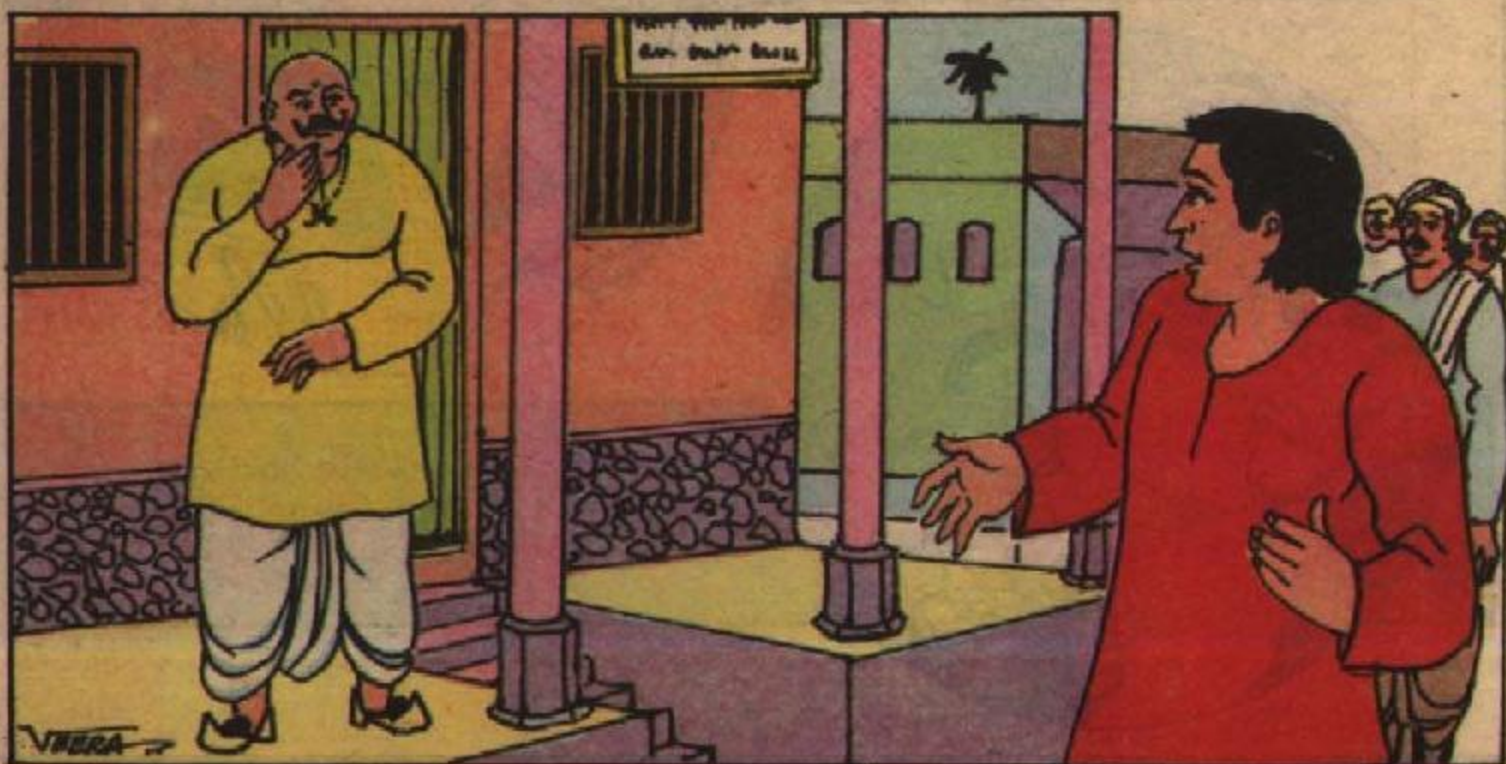
"Wrestler, sir, on the first day you had asked me if I was a fool. Do you wish me to behave like a fool even after enjoying your hospitality for a month? No, sir, I have grown wise. Fools fight, not the wise ones. I will not fight. And so far as twisting the moustache is concerned, I can no more do so, for I have already shed my moustache."

The villager drew everybody's attention to his clean-shaven upper-lip.

The crowd burst into a laughter.

"I leave you and your moustache in peace."

The villager went away.



THE THIEF'S STRATEGY

Abu stole Rahim's goat and enjoyed a feast. He was produced before the Kazi, but was acquitted for lack of evidence.



Abu's friend asked him, "Today you are set free. But what will you do on the Day of Judgment when Rahim will accuse you before the Almighty?"

"I will deny the charge," said Abu.

"What if the goat itself appears and testifies to your having stolen it? What will you do then?" the friend persisted in his question.



"In that case I will take hold of the goat and give it to Rahim, saying, Here is your goat," replied Abu.





ADVENTURES OF A MONEY-BAG

Ramanath was worried about the marriage of his only daughter. He did not know how to acquire the money needed for the wedding.

"Why don't you sell off half of our paddy-lands and secure the money needed for the wedding?" suggested his wife.

Out of the sale of his paddy-lands Ramanath gained fifty gold coins which he hid in a trunk in his bed-room. While he was hiding the bag of coins, the eyes of relative named Shombhu fell on it. The fellow quietly picked it up and left the house.

Shombhu required the money for buying a plot of land. Hiding the bag in a box, he left that evening to finalise the deal. As soon as he left, his son Shekhar, an opium addict, for changes, came across the bag of coins. Overjoyed with the treasure he

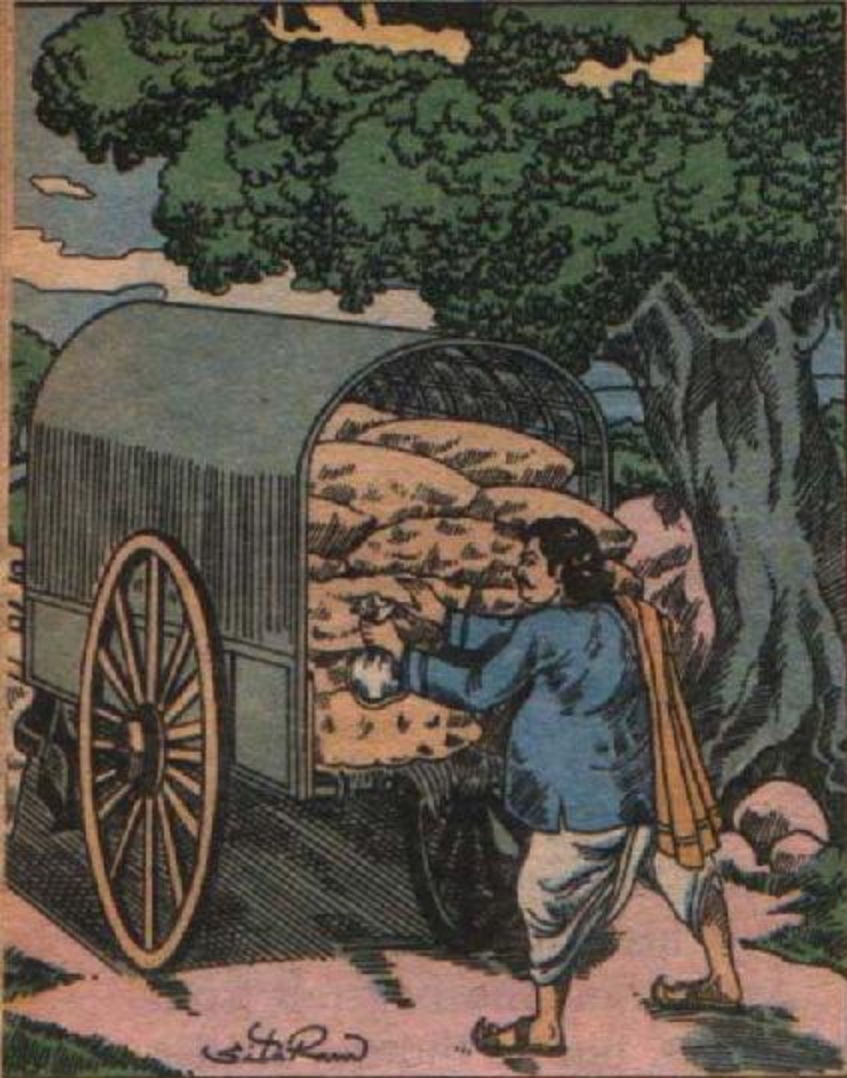
had found, he grabbed the bundle and tucking it in his dhoti, ran to his pal's house.

As he ran, the bag fell from his waist, but he did not realise his loss as he was under the influence of opium. A rice-merchant, who happened to pass by, spotted the bag. He asked carter to stop for a minute under some pretext and picked it up eagerly and quietly hid it amidst the ricesacks, lest his carter should see it.

The merchant reached his godown and found the village chief waiting to talk to him. While he was talking to the chief, his servant began to unload the rice-sacks. After the chief left the godown, the merchant remembered the bag. But, it was too late. It was not to be found.

It was of course his servant





who had hit the treasure! He reached home and gave the bag to his wife. "What if anyone comes to know of this treasure?" she suggested.

While they were digging in their kitchen garden, their neighbour, Bhudoo, who was strolling on the terrace of his house, spied upon their activities. As soon as the couple left the garden, Bhudoo stealthily entered their compound, unearthed the bag and quietly returned to his own house.

Now, when Bhudoo was busy in the neighbour's garden, a thief had taken the opportunity to sneak into his house. When

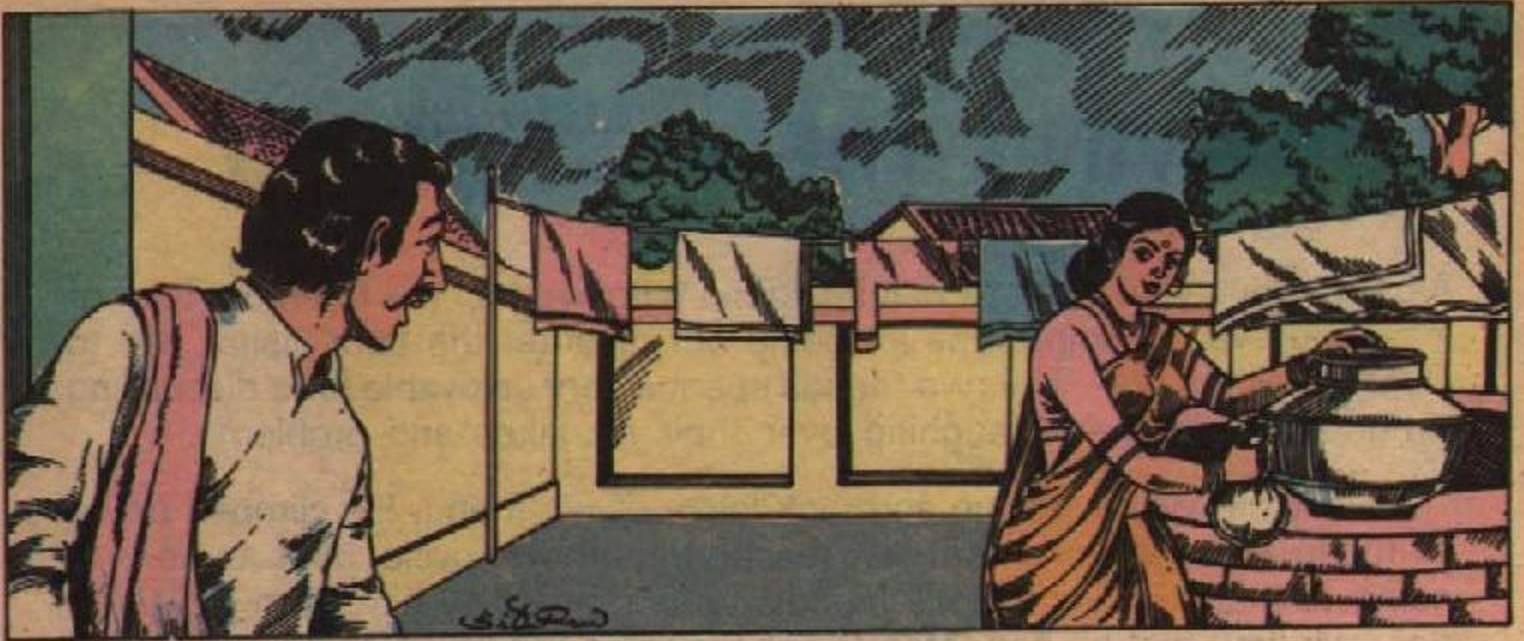
Bhudoo returned with the bag the thief saw him hide it in his almirah. He awaited for Bhudoo to fall asleep.

The thief stole the bag and escaped from Bhudoo's house. But, as his ill-luck would have it, a few dogs roaming in the street barked at him and chased him, waking up the people from a nearby choultry. And the people, seeing someone run, gave him a hot chase.

The thief escaped, but, in order to save the bag from his persuers, he had thrown it towards the bush on his way. After an house or so, he returned to the spot, but he could not find it.

It so happened that a priest, who was in the habit of going early in the morning to the river for a bath, had found the bag. He picked it up. At his house there were some guests who had come to invite him to a marriage. Not wanting that the guests should see his treasure, he wrapped it in his wet towel and threw it into a vessel as soon as he entered his house.

The priest's wife, who used to go the river for bathing and washing clothes, picked up the vessel and walked away, dump-



ing other clothes in the vessel. At the river she met her dear friend, Sheela, and both remained engrossed in gossip.

After washing their clothes, the priest's wife and Sheela went away to their respective homes. Now, both the ladies had bought vessels together which were exactly alike and they got exchanged by oversight.

Reaching home, Sheela took out the washed clothes and dried them on the line at the back of her house. Suddenly, she found the bag of gold coins at the bottom of the vessel.

"Sheela", shouted Ramanath,

coming out of his house, "have you seen the bag of gold coins anywhere? I can't find it in the trunk!"

Ramanath was surprised to see the bag in Sheela's hands.

"What are you doing there with the bag? This money is meant for our daughter's marriage and I can't spare any for you! So don't take out a single coin from that." Ramanath snatched the bag from his wife's hand and went away.

"I am sure, he must have by mistake hidden the bag in the vessel! What a confused memory he has!" thought Sheela as she resumed her work of drying clothes.

**MAKE SURE OF YOUR COPY OF ENGLISH CHANDAMAMA
BY PLACING A REGULAR ORDER
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SAVING THE LAST THING

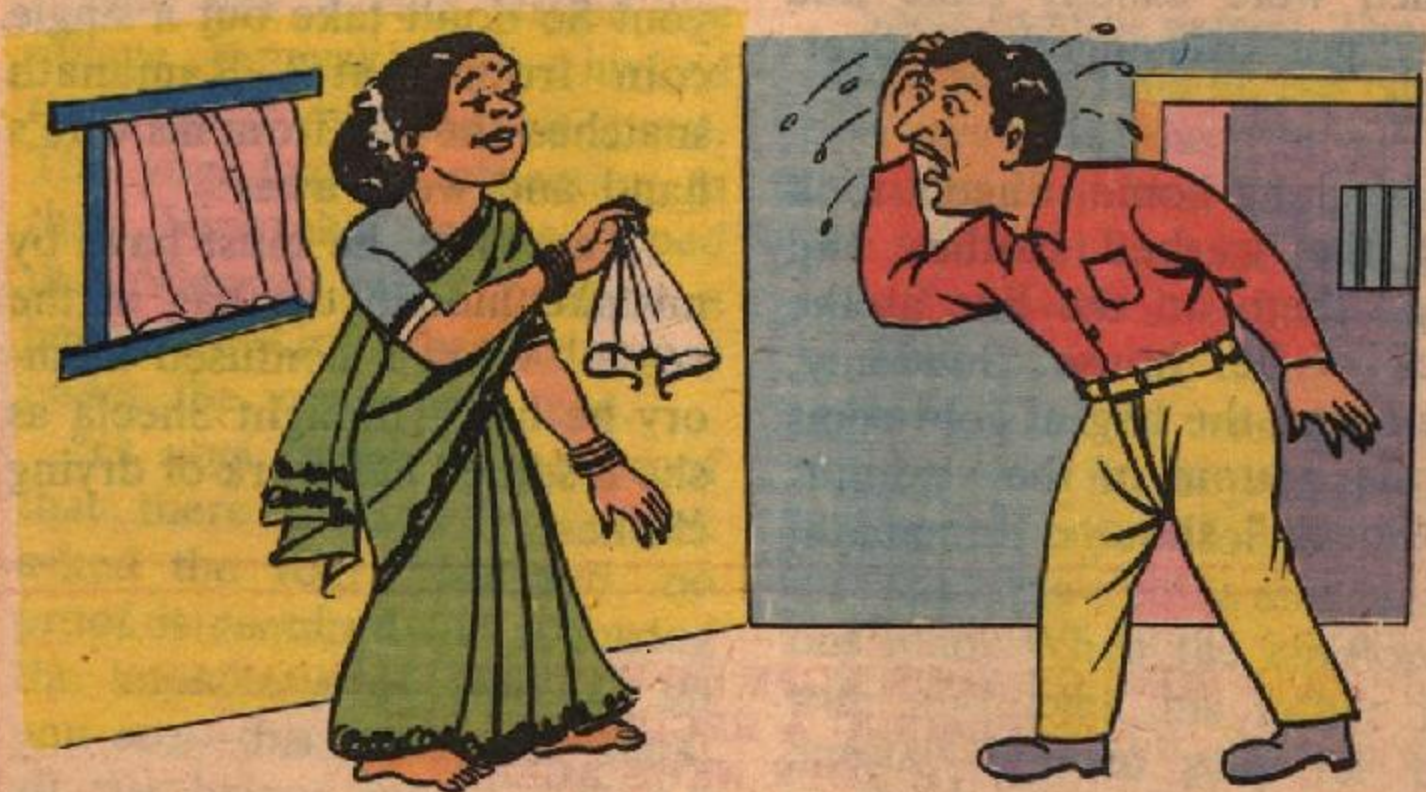
A gentleman once went to visit his friend who lived on the top-most floor of a ten-storeyed building. The lift being out of order the poor visitor had to climb up all the way. The two friends spent a very enjoyable time discussing a hundred things and laughing over their mistakes and problems.

At last the visitor got up and took leave of his friend. He climbed down all those steps again and at last reached his motor cycle. Just as he was going to start the vehicle his friend's wife shouted to him from the tenth floor window that he had forgotten all his three things which he had carried up. Cursing himself for his carelessness he asked her to throw them down. Promptly came his helmet. In trying to catch it as it came crashing, he nearly broke his hand. Swearing, he looked up in time to see his precious dark glasses sailing down. He made a dive for them but missed and the glasses were shattered.

Injured, and his glasses gone, he shouted, "Don't throw anything any more!" He rushed up and arrived breathless and asked for the last thing he had forgotten.

What was held out to him this time was his handkerchief.

M.H.





THE JEWEL IN THE NECKLACE

Near the Vindhya forest there was once a Gurukul run by Pandit Krishnacharya. His reputation had spread far and wide and students came to him from all over the kingdom. They worked as they studied. They maintained the gardens and orchards belonging to the Gurukul.

One day, as the Pundit sat for meditation, he heard a hue and cry nearby. He found that the noise was made by his own students. Four students were taking Prakash, one of their colleagues, to task.

"Stop!" cried the Pundit. "What is the matter?"

"Gurudev, Prakash has been stealing mangoes from our orchard. We told him to ask us if he wants any, but he seems to have some pleasure in stealing," explained one of the older stu-

dents. "That's why, we are teaching him a lesson," he added.

"Now leave him alone. And all of you should meet me this evening," said the Guru and he returned to his meditation.

That evening, all the students of the Gurukul gathered under a tree and the Pundit said, "My boys, I am deeply pained to hear about Prakash's bad habits. You know, water is a very restless thing and the moment it gets a chance, it flows downwards. Similarly, man's nature too is restless. At the first opportunity most people fall into bad habits which bring them sorrows and suffering. Let me tell you a story to illustrate what I've just said..."

Anil was a young bright boy. But, having fallen into bad company, he lost all interest in



learning his lessons and started roaming about with his friends and soon took to stealing. He ultimately became a thief.

Now, in that town, there was a very big temple. It was known all over the kingdom not only for the deity's power but also for the jewel that was in the necklace of the deity. The jewel was supposed to bring prosperity to the entire kingdom. There used to be an annual function in the town to offer obeisance to the deity and thousands of people used to attend it. Even the neighbouring kings and princes attended the celebration.

Once, it so happened that a

neighbouring king, Prithvindra, came to see the jewel in the deity's necklace. As he had a good knowledge of precious stones, he guessed that the jewel must be worth lakhs of rupees. As soon as he returned to his kingdom, King Prithvindra called his secret agent, Naresh, and told him of his desire to have the jewel for himself.

Naresh then came to the town and started befriending some important people. Everyone got the impression that Naresh was a good and noble man. Then, after a few weeks, he befriended the priest of the famous temple. After having gained his confidence, one day Naresh sought the priest's collaboration in stealing the jewel from the temple. At first, the priest did not agree. But, when Naresh offered him one lakh rupees, greed overtook him and the priest agreed to collaborate in his plan.

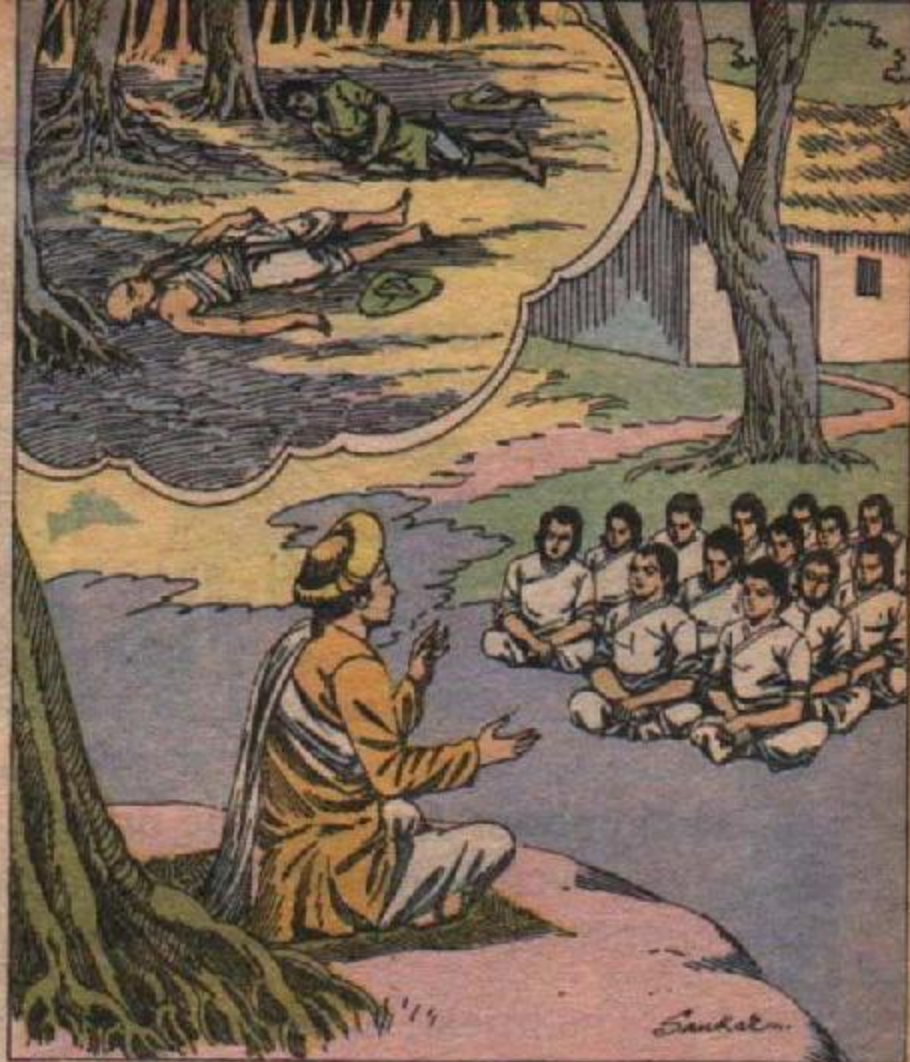
One night, Anil was returning home after a futile attempt to burgle a house. As he passed by the temple, he saw the priest entering the temple compound with another unknown person. He grew suspicious. He quietly

slipped into the temple and hid himself behind a pillar. Soon, he saw the priest enter the inner chamber and take off the deity's precious necklace. The priest's companion was at the entrance. Anil grabbed the priest and threatened to hand him over to the king. "Of course, if you agree to share the jewel with me, then I'll not raise an alarm," said Anil, tactfully.

The priest agreed to Anil's proposal, for he thought that he would gain much more this way. He closed the doors of the temple and left with Anil. Naresh was waiting for the priest outside the temple. Anil gave him a hard blow on his head. Naresh lay dead. Throwing the keys of the temple near him, Anil escaped with the priest.

They walked through the night and reached a village in the early hours of the next day. They bought some food and sat under a tree, outside the village, to enjoy their meal. But, each had managed to mix some poison in the other's food and both lay almost dead after they ate their food.

The Pundit concluded his story, saying, "You see, one can



begin as a petty thief of a mangoes, but unless one is careful, one may grow into a bandit and meet a sad end!"

The children dispersed except for Prakash. He approached the Pundit and said, "Gurudev, I've learnt my lesson. I promise you that I shall never again steal in my life. Pardon me for whatever I've done till now."

The Pundit was pleased. He blessed the boy.

After Prakash had left the place, the Pundit's wife, who was also listening to the story, asked, "Prakash has got a chance to rectify his mistakes and to become a good boy. But,



what about Anil and the priest? Why were they not given any chance to become better men?"

"The priest, of course, had no chance of becoming a better man. As he was old, he succumbed to the poison and died instantly. But, Anil, who was young and strong, did not die. As he was struggling for his life, a yogi, who happened to pass by, came to his rescue and saved him by giving him some medicine.

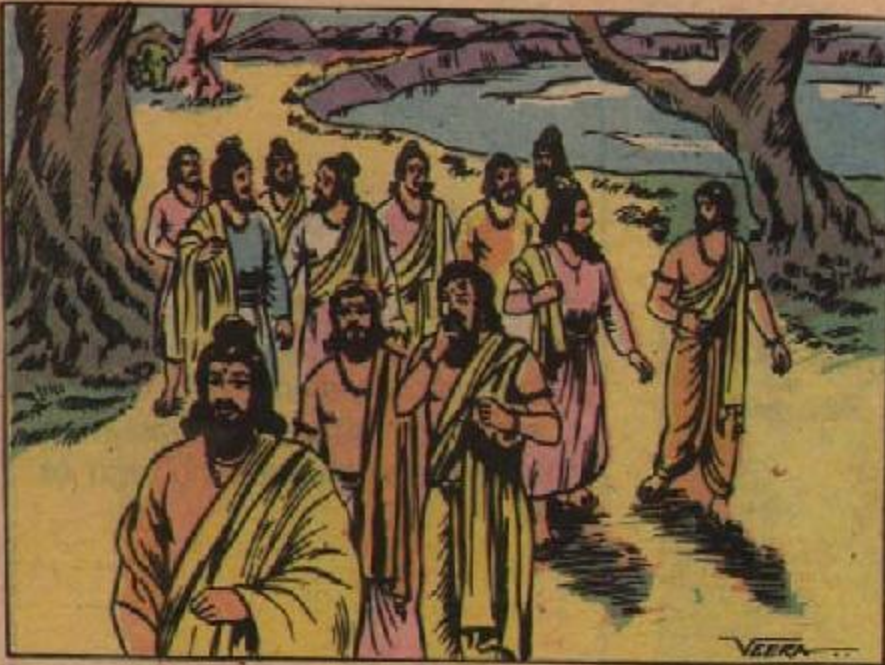
"Once he recovered, Anil told the yogi everything about his past. The yogi took pity on him and agreed to take him as his disciple."

"But, Anil, who had caused two deaths, went unpunished. That is no justice!" said the Pundit's wife.

"Of course, Anil suffered torment for two long years. The yogi did not keep Anil in his Ashram in the beginning. He asked him to stay in a cave far off, all alone. Those two years Anil repented for all his misdeeds. Then he was a changed man. For the next eight years he stayed with the yogi and obtained knowledge, of the sacred books. Before leaving, the yogi gave him a new name, Krishnacharya!"

"How strange! What play of Providence!" exclaimed Krishnacharya's wife.

A minute later, she asked, "What happened to the jewel?" "Of course, that was returned to the temple," replied Krishnacharya with a smile on his face.



TEMPLES OF INDIA

CHIDAMBARAM

SHRINE OF THE COSMIC DANCER

Long long ago there was a colony of scholars at Darukavanam. These scholars had grown extremely proud of their learning and power to perform miracles. They thought that they deserved to be worshipped by all.

One day while they were away from their homes, a young mendicant reached the colony and began singing and telling stories. The wives of the scholars were enamoured of him, so much so that they stood or sat pressing around him, forgetting their household chores.



Back in their colony, the scholars were aghast to see the situation. They called the ladies to break away from the strangers, but to no avail. They shouted threats, but neither the mendicant nor the ladies even cared to look at them.



The scholars took recourse to their supernatural powers. They created a tiger and directed the terrible beast at the mendicant. The tiger roared and rushed upon the singing stranger. Even then the stranger showed no sign of fear.

But once the tiger had come in touch with the stranger, it just disappeared! The scholars saw that the skin of the beast had become the stranger's garment. They were amazed and did not know what to do.



But they did not give up. They created a pigmy demon, charging it with all their hatred and anger and unleashed it on the stranger. The ferocious pigmy, hissing and gesticulating, rushed upon him. But the next moment it was found lying under his foot.

The scholars now understood that the stranger had great powers and he was perhaps some god in disguise. They reluctantly went closer to him, their hands folded. "Who are you?" they asked with humility.



The stranger then revealed himself. He was none other than Lord Siva. As the scholars were His devotees, He had enacted the scene to destroy their ego. They were humbled, when they found that even their wives did not recognise them.



The scholars sat and sang a song with great devotion in praise of Lord Siva. Pleased, Siva danced before them. The devotees looked on, entranced. Then Siva disappeared.





Later, Adishesha, the divine serpent, heard of this event. He prayed to Siva to perform that dance once before him. But one had to be born as a human being to enjoy the dance Siva had performed!

Adishesha was born as Patanjali and witnessed the dance depicted in the Nataraja image of Siva. The Nataraja image stands on the dwarf, the ego. In one hand is drum, rhythm of life; in another is fire, the energy; the third hand is raised to protect the devotee, the fourth ready to grant refuge.



The place where the dance had been performed is famous as Chidambaram, the seat of Lord Siva since times immemorial. The temple that stands today is not only huge, but also about 2000 years old in parts. Its sculpture is magnificent and it is made of granite, sprawling over 32 acres of land!



New Tales of King
Vikram and the Vampire

THE BELIEVER AND THE NON-BELIEVER

Dark was the night and weird the atmosphere. It rained from time to time. At the intervals of thunder claps could be heard moaning of jackals and weird laughter of spirits. Flashes of lightning showed fearful faces.

But King Vikram swerved not. He climbed the ancient tree once again and brought the corpse down. However, as soon as he began crossing the desolate cremation ground, the vampire that possessed the corpse said, "O King, I hope you are not working under the influence of any yogi. You never know how and when they cast a spell on you. Let me cite an example. Pay attention to my narration. That might bring you some relief"

The vampire went on: In olden days there was a prosperous village named Jabarang. Vinayak belonged to that vil-



lage. He was intelligent and good-natured, but he was an atheist. That is to say, he did not believe that there was God.

One day a yogi visited the village. Vinayak's father invited the yogi to become his guest. The yogi had no objection to this. Vinayak's father hoped that Vinayak might become a believer in God when he comes under the yogi's influence.

"O yogi, what is the proof that there is God?" Vinayak asked the yogi. "My son, no proof is required for acquiring the knowledge of God. In all you see—this earth, the stars, all the beings there is God,"

replied the yogi.

That did not satisfy Vinayak, "Well, all I see will be there, whether I believe in God or not. I don't have to believe in God for the sake of all this!" retorted Vinayak.

"My son, if you don't feel the need to believe in God's existence, you need not bother about Him. However, if you ever feel the need to know that He is there, go into the temple and pray for something very ardently without any selfish motive. Maybe, you'll see your prayer granted! That will convince you that there is God!" After the Yogi departed from the village, Vinayak forgot all about his advice.

Some months passed. The village landlord took ill. His condition grew serious. Physicians failed to cure him. An astrologer said that he can be cured only if one who does not believe in God, prays for him.

Now, Vinayak was the only non-believer in the village. He had great respect for the landlord who was a noble and generous man. When the landlord's wife and even his father requested him to pray for the landlord, Vinayak could not re-

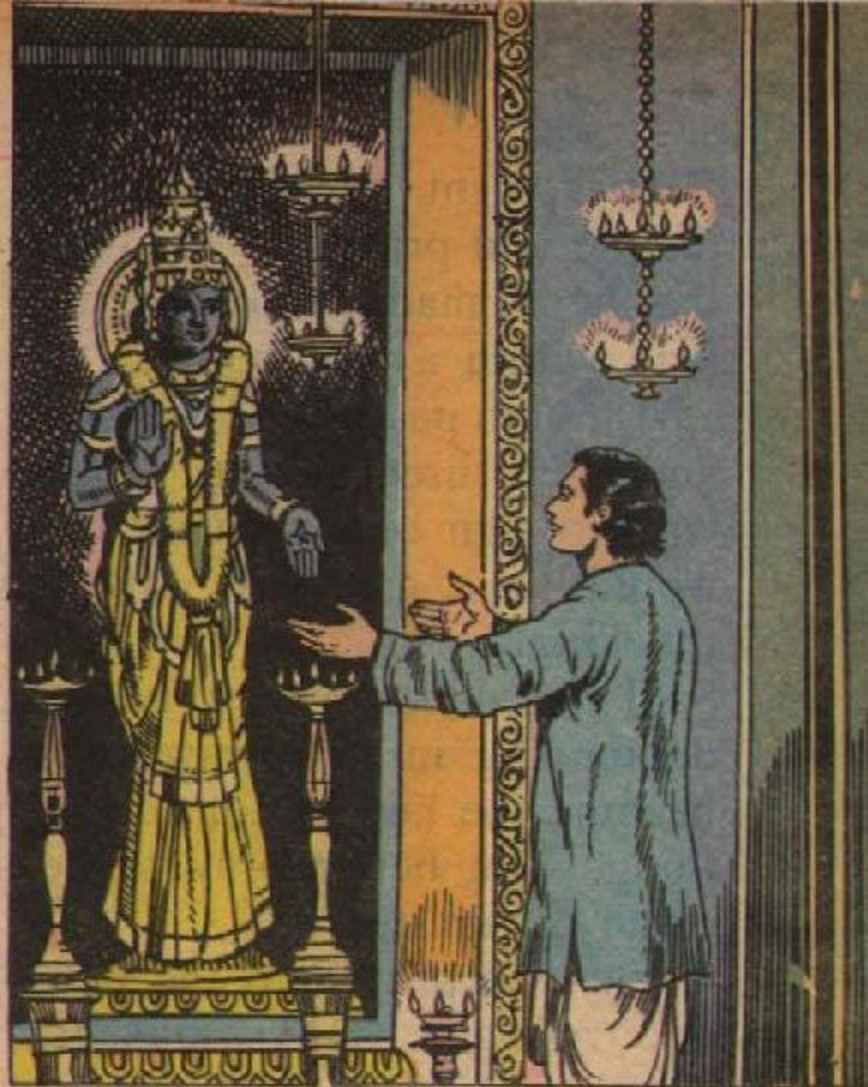
fuse. He went to the village temple. Before the deity, he said, "O Mother, if there is God and if this image represents God, let my prayer be heard. Let the landlord recover from his illness."

Vinayak stood in silence before the deity for some time before leaving the temple. It was night. He went home and slept after his dinner. In the morning he woke up at the voice of some people talking to his father. He learnt that the landlord had begun walking in the morning to everybody's surprise.

Within two or three days the landlord looked quite fit, as if nothing serious had happened to him!

The news of the landlord's surprising recovery at Vinayak's prayer spread among the people of the nearby villages. One day Vinayak's old teacher who was suffering from a chronic disease met him and requested him to pray for him. Vinayak was moved by the teacher's long suffering and went into the temple and prayed for his cure. To his joy and surprise, the teacher's painful disease was gone!

Thereafter more and more



sick people came to Vinayak. Kind-hearted that he was, Vinayak prayed for them and they got amazing results.

One day evening Surabhi, Vinayak's wife, told him, "You are praying for so many people. Should you not once pray for me?"

"What do you want?" asked Vinayak.

"I want you to become the king of this land so that I can be the queen."

Surabhi's request at first amused Vinayak. But he also thought, "What is wrong in such a prayer? After all, I can make a better king than the present king."

That night he went to the temple and prayed to the deity that he be made the king of the land within a month.

A month passed and then two and even three months. There was no sign of any event that would have crowned Vinayak the king.

Said Surabhi, "We were too demanding in our prayer. To become the king is not an easy thing. You better pray to become a minister."

Vinayak prayed to the deity accordingly. Days passed. There was no evidence of his prayer being granted.

"This time too our prayer was

quite pompous. Let us make a smaller prayer. Ask the deity to give us a thousand gold coins within a week," proposed Surabhi. Vinayak prayed accordingly. A month passed, but no gold coins were showered on them.

"Now I understand those people getting cured had nothing to do with your prayer. They would have been cured anyway," observed Surabhi.

Meanwhile Vinayak got a job in the town. The day he and his wife were getting ready to proceed to the town, the yogi was back in the village.

"Vinayak did you develop



faith in God?" asked the yogi.

Before Vinayak had said anything, his wife said, "Faith in God? I, who was a believer, have lost my faith in God. How can my husband, who was a non-believer, develop any faith in God?"

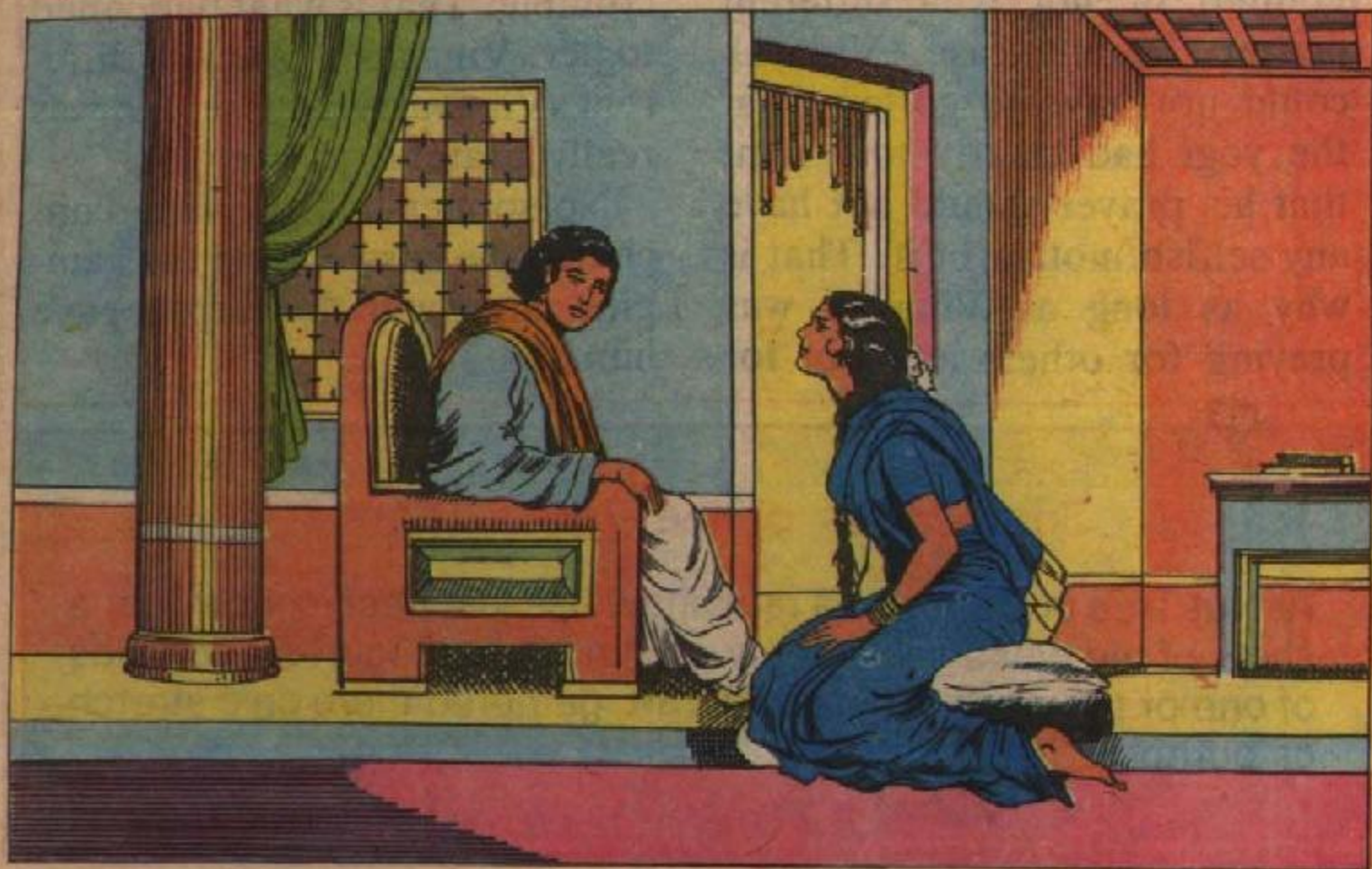
The yogi did not say anything, but kept looking at Vinayak. Vinayak bowed down and touched his feet and said, "O Enlightened Soul, I am most grateful to you. Your advice has changed the philosophy of my life."

The yogi smiled and blessed Vinayak.

The vampire paused for a

moment and then demanded of King Vikram in a challenging tone, "Tell me O king, what reason could be there for Vinayak feeling grateful to the Yogi? There was nothing to prove that his prayers brought any result! As his wife observed, those who were cured of their diseases would perhaps have been cured in the natural course! Why did Vinayak not say that he had not developed any faith in God? Answer me if you can. Should you keep mum despite your knowledge of the answer, your head would roll off your neck!"

Forthwith replied king Vikram: "It is very difficult to say





who is a real believer in God and who is a real non-believer. Vinayak was a seeker of truth. He said that he did not believe in God because he had no experience of God. Prayers put him in touch with God. Whether one's prayer will be granted or not is a different matter. In any case, Vinayak could not have forgotten what the yogi had clearly told him; that his prayer should not have any selfish motive in it. That is why as long as Vinayak was praying for others and not for

himself his prayers were being granted.

"Surabhi's faith was superficial. She believed in God because her parents and kinsmen believed in God. For her, God existed only if He granted her wishes! Such faith can easily crumble. That is what happened to her. Vinayak's case was different. Vinayak was wise. He was really grateful to the yogi."

No sooner had the king concluded the answer than the vampire, along with the corpse, gave him the slip.

Scarecrows of the World—Unite!

At Nut Tree in California a rare show has just been concluded: a show of the world's scarecrows. Hundreds of figures—samples of one of the world's oldest folk art, gathered there on a stretch of pumpkin field.

STORY OF

RAMA



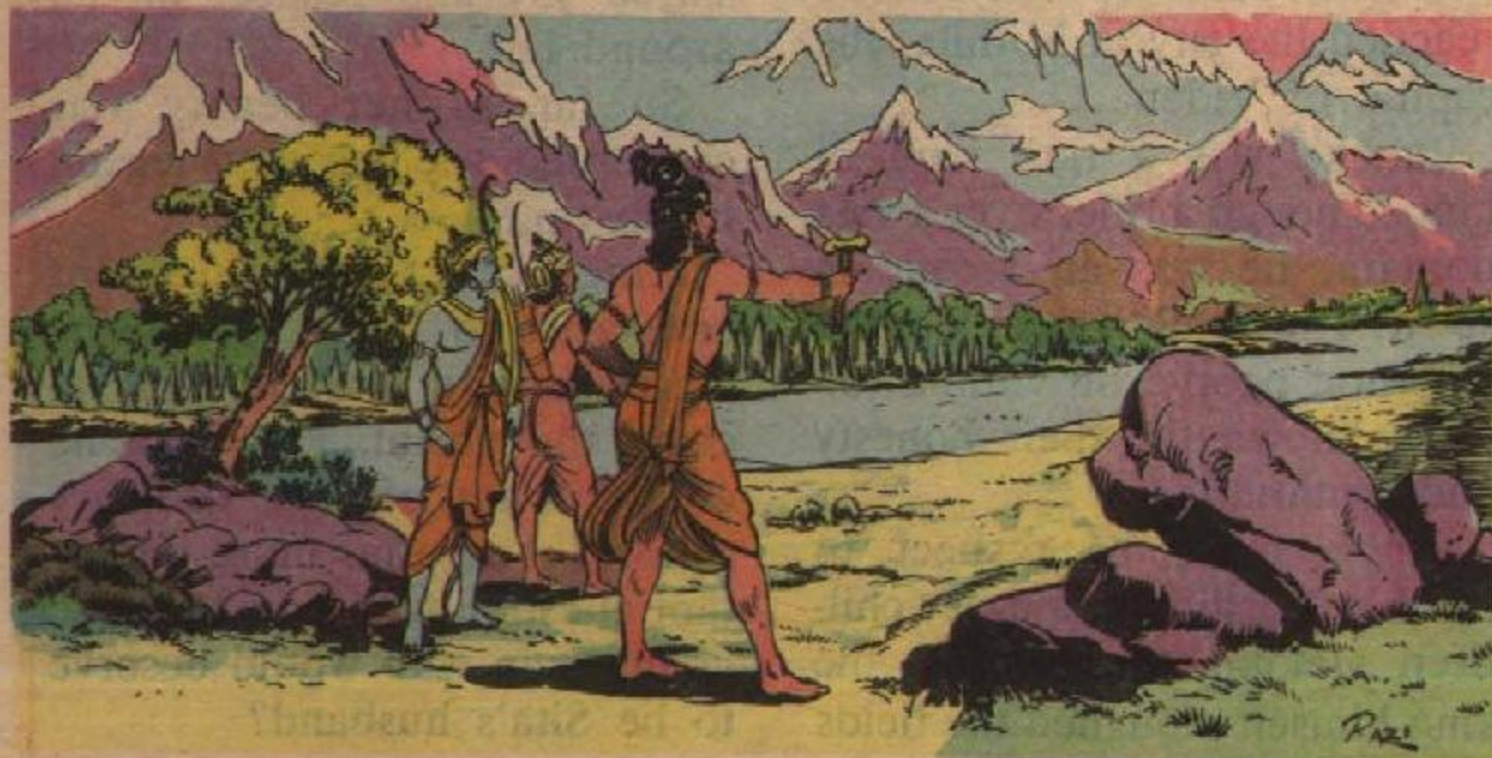
—By Manoj Das

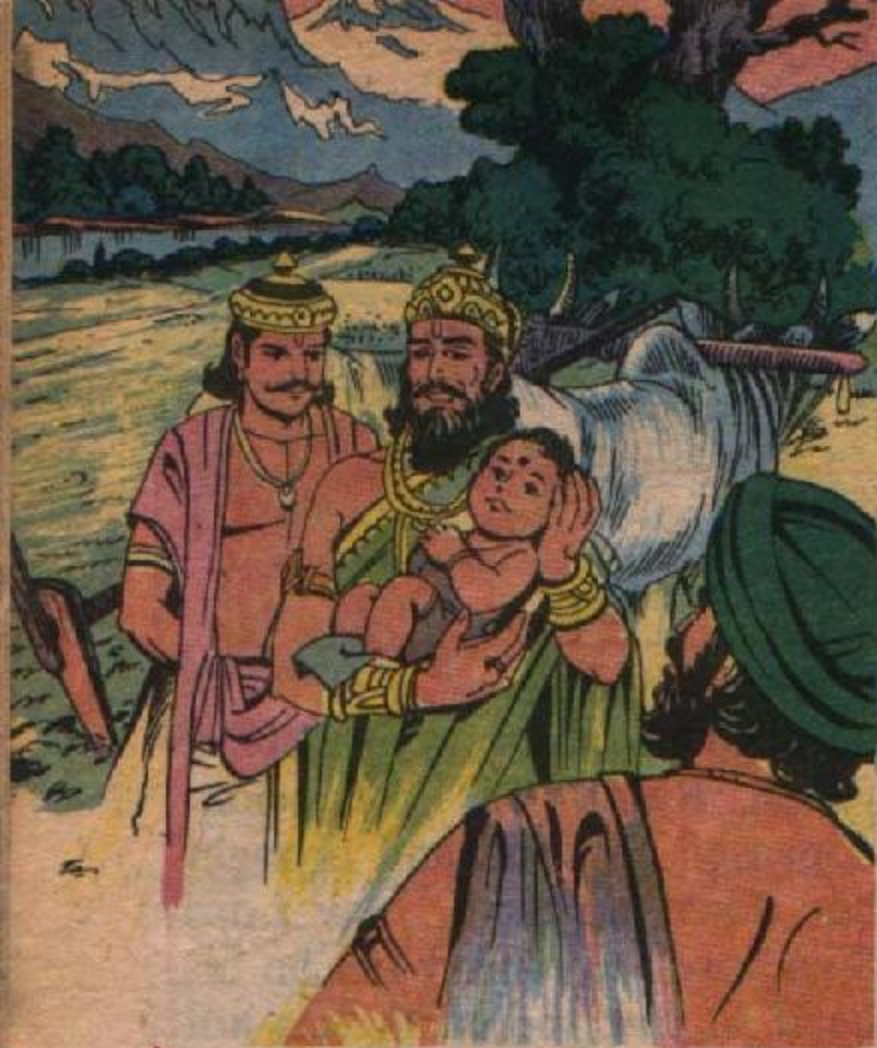
(Rama and Lakshmana were led by Sage Viswamitra into the forest where they destroyed and repelled a number of demoniac and hostile forces. Thereafter, the sage led them towards Mithila.)

THE BOW OF SIVA

Sage Viswamitra led Rama and Lakshmana through enchanting valleys and hills, narrating to the young princes the history of these lands. Among several other stories, the sage told them the story of the Ganga, when they sighted the sacred river: how the Ganga, daughter of the Himalaya, had been ushered into heavens, how a great king named Bhagiratha,

belonging to the very dynasty of which Rama was the scion, appeased Brahma and brought her down to earth, how Lord Siva bore the mighty fall on his head so that the earth was not shattered by it, how the celestial stream followed Bhagiratha through numerous countries bringing surprise and smile to the inhabitants, and how at last she entered the nether-world





and flowed on the remains of Bhagiratha's ancestors, who had been reduced to ashes under Sage Kapila's curse, bringing liberation to their spirits.

After a pleasant and educative excursion, the three reached the city of Mithila, the capital of Videha.

Janaka was a rare kind of king. Though a ruler over a vast domain, he was an ascetic in spirit. The nobility as well as the common people of Mithila too were known for their honesty and truthfulness.

As a mark of respect to Mother Earth who fed her children yielding them crops, the king himself ploughed the fields

on auspicious days. On one such occasion, at a serene moment that was to become most memorable to him, his plough discovered a wonder of wonders—a lovely baby girl.

He took the girl in his arms. Intuition informed him that this gift of the Mother Earth was an exceptional child and that he must bestow exceptional care on her.

He carried her home in ecstasy. Life was no longer the same to King Janaka. His love for the child continued to bring him a sense of elevation, for as the child grew up, it became evident that she was mercy and grace incarnate. She spoke wisely and intelligently, but never rudely; her smile and look inspired joy and respect on all around her.

So far as her beauty was concerned, she became a legend in no time.

Kings and chieftains sent emissaries to Janaka proposing marriage with Sita. Janaka became thoughtful. How can he entertain any of these ordinary suitors? And a far more important question was, how to find a young man who would deserve to be Sita's husband?

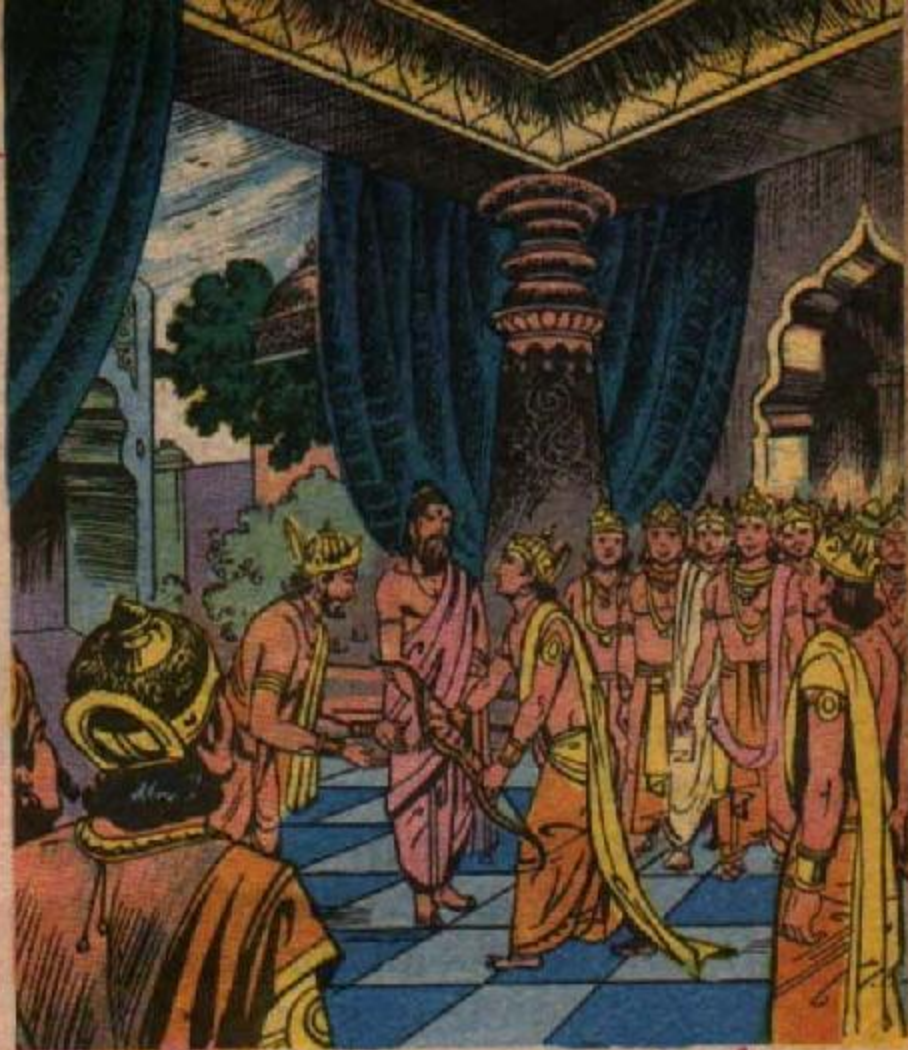


One morning, as he sat in meditation, an inspiration visited him. Instantly he took the decision that only he who can handle the Bow of Siva lying in his custody shall win Sita's hand in marriage. He felt convinced that more than physical prowess, what was necessary to achieve the feat was an inner poise and strength.

Now, this Bow of Siva was an extraordinary weapon. It had been handed down from generation to generation. It happened like this: Sati, the daughter of King Daksha, married Siva against her father's will and went away to Kailash, her husband's abode. Once on the occasion of a Yajna, Daksha invited all his daughters and sons-in-law but ignored Sati and Siva.

Sati, however, reached on time for the Yajna, for she knew that no daughter ever needed an invitation to visit her parents' house. The impulsive Daksha burst into a tirade against Siva as soon as his eyes fell on Sati who was dressed like a hermitess in keeping with Siva's life-style, quite unlike a Princess!

Sati had arrived there, sure of



a loving welcome from her father. The unexpected reception shocked her; the abuses heaped on Siva were too much for her to bear. She fell down, dead.

Informed of this unexpected turn of events Siva lifted a gigantic bow and proposed to apply it on the gods who were ready to partake of the offerings of Daksha even though the arrogant king had not invited Siva.

The panicky gods prayed to the God of gods, Siva, for mercy. Siva calmed down and handed over the bow to the gods.

The gods carried the fearful weapon to King Devarata, an illustrious ancestor of Janaka, and asked him to preserve it.

The bow of Siva was kept in an iron box that rolled on eight wheels. As King Janaka's decision became known, princes made a beeline for the weapon, but what to speak of their wielding it, they could not even lift it!

They felt humiliated. They joined their forces and surrounded the city of Mithila. For a full year King Janaka, mobilising all his strength, kept the enemy at bay. But he was running out of resources. Sad at heart, he ardently prayed to the gods to come to his rescue. His prayers found a ready response. A mysterious army called the Chaturanga, made up of all the four wings of a complete force—soldiers on elephants, horses, chariots as well as foot—wrought havoc in the enemy camp and wiped out the wicked kings.

King Janaka breathed a sigh of relief, but his quest for a worthy bridegroom for Sita was still unsatisfied. He could not help being a little pensive.

It was at this moment that news of Sage Viswamitra's arrival reached him. He went forth to receive the sage and was amazed to see the two charming princes with him.

"Who are these lads, remarkable for their harmonious stature, bright and beautiful eyes and dignified gait, O great sage?" the King asked.

"O noble King, they are Rama and Lakshmana, sons of the pious King Dasaratha of Ayodhya. I have brought them here to have a look at the unusual object in your custody—the Bow of Siva," said Sage Viswamitra.

—To Continue





THE BIRTHDAY GIFT

King Rajendran of Bhishamgarh, when quite young, was once in danger of losing his life to his enemy. He escaped into the forest. There he was given shelter by a young hermit named Jayananda. After some days the young hermit contacted some people of the kingdom who were loyal to the king. They made a plan to free the kingdom from the clutches of the enemy. The plan succeeded. King Rajendra got back his throne.

The day the king was taken to his capital at the head of a procession, the young hermit accompanied him. At the king's request Jayananda stayed on in the palace.

The king was always respectful towards Jayananda. No wonder that everybody else also

began to show him great respect. He was looked upon as the king's guru.

The king had a wise minister and a council of advisors. But Jayananda's advice became the last word in everything.

If on one birthday of Jayananda the king presented him with a diamond ring, on another birthday he gave him a set of jewelled robes. Jayananda dressed like a king, ate like a king and passed orders like a king.

Years passed. Once again Jayananda's birthday was approaching. "Swamiji, what gift can I give you on your birthday that is coming?" asked the king.

"My friend, I have something specific in my mind. Everybody of our generation knows that you love me and respect me.



But who will remember me in the future? I suggest that you install a statue of mine in the palace. Unveil it on my birthday," said Jayananda.

"Good. It will be done," said the king.

"See to it that the statue is made by the best sculptor, so that it shows me really as I am," suggested Jayananda.

The king asked his minister to find out who was the best sculptor. The minister informed him that one Vidyadhar who belonged to a neighbouring kingdom, was the best sculptor in the region.

The court artist was asked to

paint a life-size picture of Jayananda. The artist did an excellent job. The picture was carried to Vidyadhar's house. The sculptor was to make the statue following the picture.

The sculptor completed his work just before Jayananda's birthday. The statue was brought to the palace on a large horse-carriage and was installed at the centre of the park in front of the palace. But it remained covered.

In the morning of Jayananda's birthday the king pulled down the cover from the statue, before a gathering of noblemen.

But what is this? The statue did not seem to resemble Jayananda!

"This looks like an ascetic's statue!" commented the minister.

"As if the man whose statue it is was so poor that he could not afford good clothes!" commented the chief advisor to the king.

"Look at what he has put on for a necklace—a chain of Rudraksha beads! As if Swami Jayananda had no diamond chain to put on!" commented the court poet.

"How could Sculptor



Vidyadhar be so negligent? How is it that he did not follow my painting of Swamiji's figure?" asked the court painter in anguish.

"Had the sculptor been my subject, I would have punished him. However, we have paid him only half of his dues. We will not pay the other half." said the king in a grave tone.

Jayananda alone stood silent. His gaze was fixed on his own statue.

"Can you tell me, Minister Sir, something about the sculptor?" Jayananda asked very softly.

"Vidyadhar was a student of

Sage Vinayananda. Later he became a professional sculptor," said the minister.

Jayananda smiled though his eyes were moistened with tears.

"I understand. Vidhyadhar was my friend when I too was a student of Sage Vinayananda. While I learnt scripture from the sage, Vidyadhar learnt art and sculpture. We have not met for many years. But he seems to know all about me. He has reminded me of the fact that I was a hermit. That is my true self. I have deviated from my path. I have become a courtier, though the most respected!" said Jayananda.





All stood speechless. Jayananda said again, "This has been the best birthday gift ever given to me."

He smiled and entered his room. Within minutes he came out donning the dress of a hermit.

"Goodbye to you all. I should be back in my forest hut." The hermit began to walk.

"Can I do anything for you?"

asked the king who was quite bewildered by this sudden turn of events.

"Yes, you can do something for me. Please give a handsome reward to the sculptor. And keep the statue in some obscure corner of the palace, not in public view. The sculptor won't mind, for his purpose has been served," said Jayananda and he went away.

WONDER WITH COLOURS



MORE VALUABLE THAN GOLD

Sushama had come to her father's house with her little son, Ravi.

As Sushama was going to meet a relative in the town, Ravi insisted on going with her. But she was not ready to take him with her for many reasons.

Ravi cried.

"Don't cry. I'll bring a gold chain for you. You'll put it on when I am back day after tomorrow," said Sushama.

That silenced the boy.

She returned two days later. Ravi was asleep. Her father rushed to meet her at the door. "Have you brought a gold chain for Ravi?"

"Gold chain? Why should I bring such a costly thing, father? I said so only to silence the child!"

"I have brought one. Give it to Ravi when he wakes up," said her father handing over the chain to her.

"What have you done, father? You are not that rich!"

"I know. Gold is very costly. But more valuable is your son's faith in you. He may excuse you for your not keeping your word, but he will also learn how not to keep his own word in the future!" explained the father.

Sushama hung her head.



THE FEARLESS COW

Keshav, a farmer, had a cow, but it was a very special one. It was special not only because it yielded lots of milk, but also because of its wisdom and courage. It was named 'The Cow of Plenty'.

The king of the region came to know of the wonderful cow. He sent his minister to Keshav. The minister offered Keshav a handsome amount of money for his special cow. The farmer succumbed to the offer and sold the cow to the king.

The king looked after the cow with great care. He ordered rich feed for it, built a comfortable shelter for it and appointed a full-time caretaker for it. He even had its horns artistically decorated in gold and precious stones. It was given complete freedom to wander anywhere in the grazing grounds or to return to its shed whenever it wanted. "The cow is wise and it can very well take care of itself," everyone said.

One day the cow gave birth to

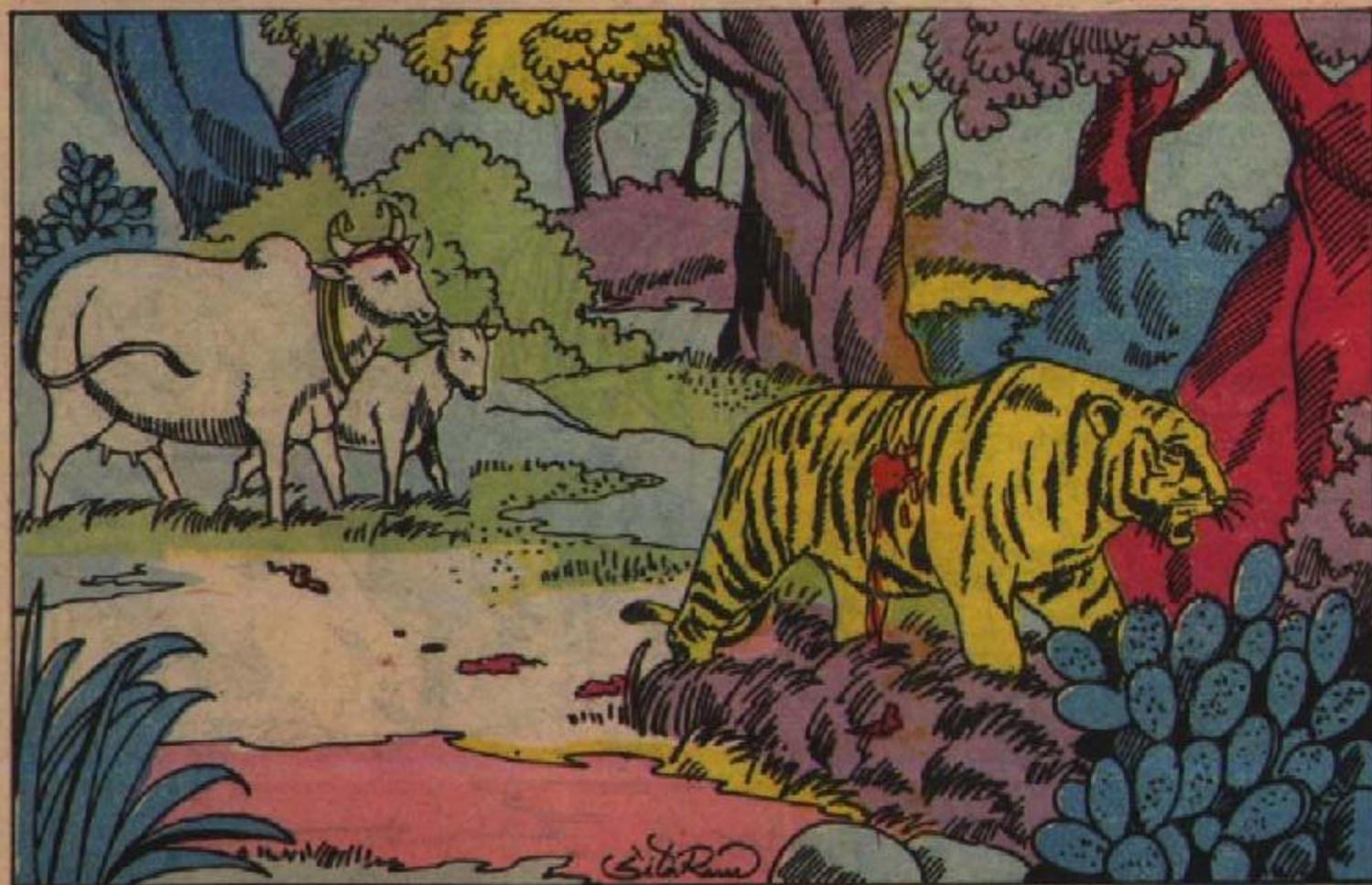


a beautiful male calf. After some months of fond rearing, the cow thought of teaching its calf the ways of the world. So it took its child to graze at a field very close to a forest. They gazed happily all through the day, and as the sun began setting low in the western sky, they made their way homeward.

Suddenly, the calf spotted a striped animal lurking in a bush. The mother cow cautioned the calf to be quiet and not to panic. Then it approached the tiger and said in a fearless tone, "I belong to the king and I'm his most favourite one. Hence, if

you value your life and do not want to be killed by the king's hunters, remove yourself from our path and let us go peacefully."

The tiger was pretty amused to meet the strange cow. "Every beast in this forest is afraid of me and they all run for their lives when they see me. But, here is a cow who is commanding me! It must be an unusual cow and surely it will make a delicious meal," said the tiger, in a voice loud enough for the cow to hear. And, far from moving away, it only prepared to leap on the cow.



The cow, calm and composed as ever, advised the young calf to take a vantage position and instructed that when it moos thrice the calf should make a sudden dash at the tiger and pierce its belly with its sharp horns.

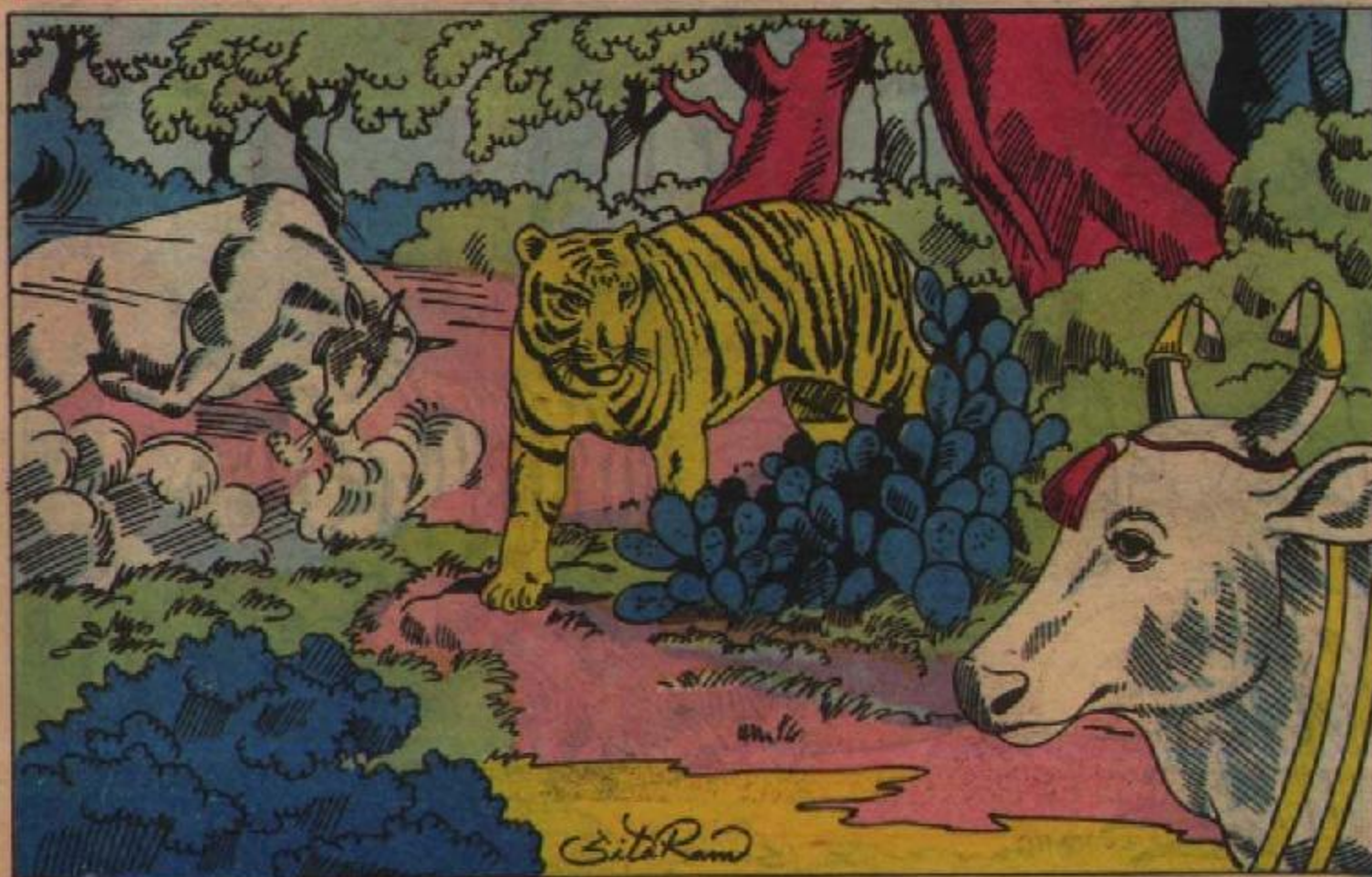
The mother cow kept the tiger engaged in talks. Suddenly, at an indication from it, the calf made a dash and tore the tiger's belly with its sharp horns. The tiger realised that it had been outwitted and it scampered away with its belly profusely bleeding.

As they resumed their walk,

the young calf asked the cow how it could face a ferocious tiger with such confidence. The cow said, "My son, one should always be calm and collected in times of danger or difficulties and act in a well-planned manner. If one becomes panicky or restless, one loses one's capacity to think clearly. It is most important to be fearless when one meets one's enemy."

The calf followed closely its mother's advice and when it grew up, it also became a great favourite of the king.

Retold by Sunanda Reddy



A PROBLEM

One day a craftsman came to the court of King Shailendra of Shantapur.

"I have made shields which can never be pierced by any spear or arrow or sword. I have also made some spears which are so strong and sharp that there is nothing they cannot pierce," claimed the proud craftsman. "I'm sure your Highness will buy them."

The king kept quiet. A few minutes passed.

"What are you thinking, my lord?" asked the impatient craftsman.

"I'm much perplexed with a problem. What if one of your spears strikes one of your shields?" said the king.



THE MOST FEARFUL FOX ON EARTH

It was raining in the forest. A little fox, quite tired, entered a cave for a while's rest. Little did he know that the cave was the residence of a tiger.

Before long the fox heard the roar of the big beast. The tiger was just giving vent to his disgust at the weather.

The fox felt the panic of his life. But only for a moment. He knew that there was no way to escape. He must exercise his wit as best as he can to get out of the predicament. He was not

very hopeful. But he must try, he decided.

The tiger entered the cave and shook himself, throwing water away from his long hair. Suddenly he heard a strange voice that came from a dark nook of the cave.

"How are you, Mr. Tiger? I've been waiting for you for quite some time!"

Surprised, the tiger located the fox. He had never known an animal, least of all a fox, who would speak to him with such



fearlessness.

"Who are you, little one? And why were you waiting for me? For me to eat you, I suppose? Well, hungry I am already. I should justify your waiting for me in a few minutes!" said the tiger bravely.

"You have a sense of humour, I must admit," said the fox, "unless of course, you are unaware of the announcement made by Indra, the King of Gods," observed the fox.

"What announcement?"

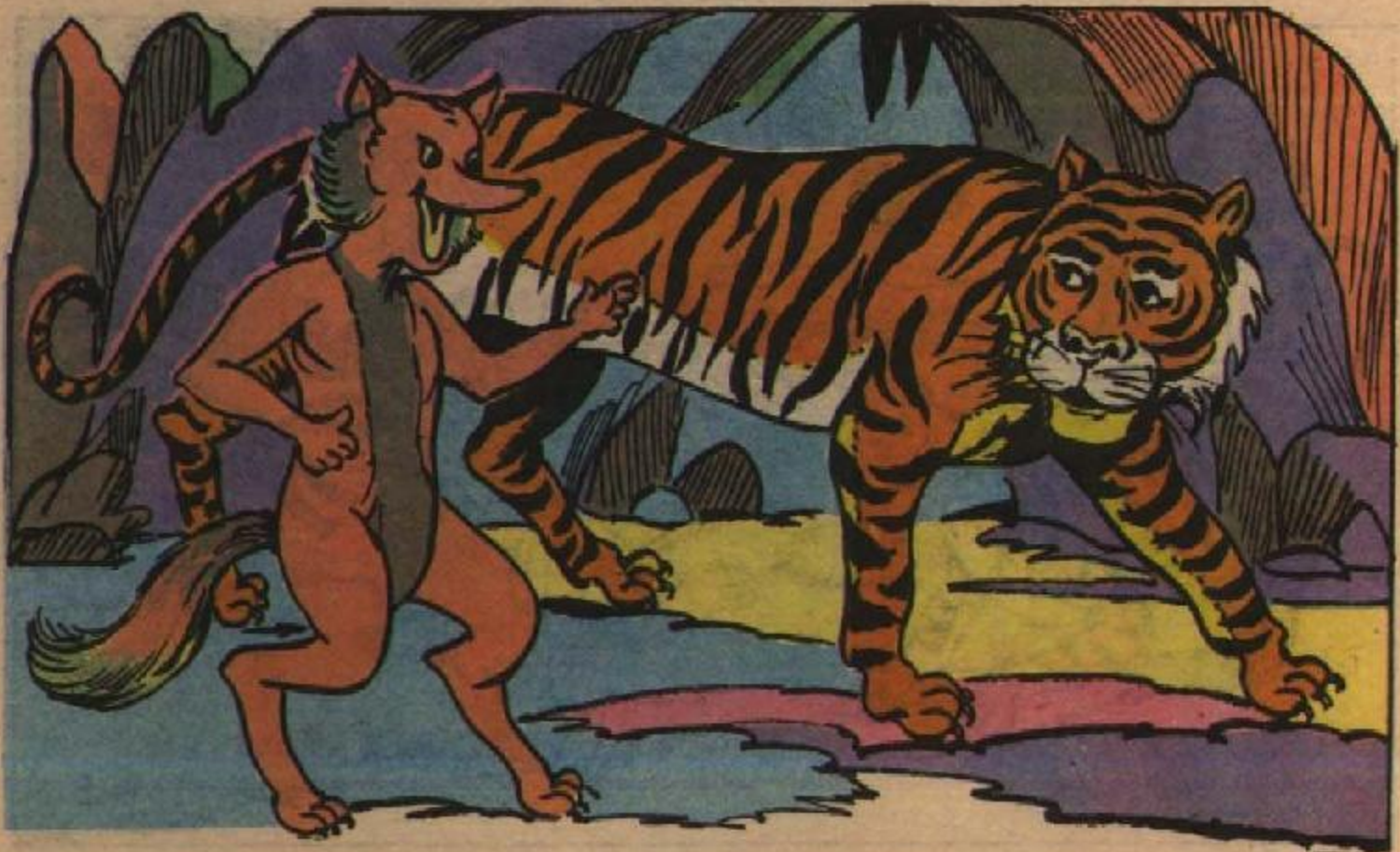
"That I was coming to inspect the forest! I'm Indira's Inspector-General of course! The pity

is, all the animals, the moment they would see me, would flee! Nobody would speak to me! I thought, I can atleast talk to you, for a tiger is not likely to be frightened even at the sight of Indra's emissary!"

"To be honest, I never heard that announcement. But do you mean to say that the animals flee at your sight?" asked a terribly surprised tiger!

"Yes, my friend. If you don't believe me, just follow me and see!"

The rain had stopped. The tiger grew very curious to check if what the fox said was true. He



followed the fox.

First it was a deer whose eyes fell on the fox followed by the tiger. It fled for its life.

The fox looked over its shoulder at the tiger quiet meaningfully.

Next it was a boar. The moment it saw them it took it heels, needless to say, because of the tiger.

"Did you see? They are so stupid! They won't even let me talk to them."

Just then a hyena saw the tiger and fled too!

The tiger was convinced of

what the fox said. Hiding his anxiety, he said, "Sir, I was probably fast asleep when the heavenly announcement was made. Now, kindly tell God Indra that all is well in this forest. Thanks."

The tiger turned his back towards the fox and left for his cave hastily. "Who knows what was the whole text of the announcement? If all the animals are just afraid of the fox, there must be some reason which I am yet to know! I better keep away from this most fearful fox on earth!" he told himself.



DID YOU KNOW?



In certain regions of Africa like Chad, students show respect to their teachers by turning their backs to them!

The 18th century Mayor of Grand Lemps, France, had an original way of stopping the sale of alcoholic drink. He issued an ordinance to the effect that anybody can walk out of a bar without paying for the drink he had consumed!



How great can be the arms of a mother was evident on December 2, 1927. A child named Marie Finster fell off a high building in Vienna—but fell into the arms of her mother who happened to be on the pavement just then. The child was saved from certain death.

Henrich Noste of Australia could play piano quite well with his tongue.



Not a single girl has been born in the Bossant family of Gijon, Spain, during the past one hundred years!

There are more than 40,000 direct descendants of Confucius (551-478 B.C.) living in China today.



THE GOLDEN RULE AND THE GOLDEN SHOWER

"What is *Golden Rule*, Grandpa?" asked Rajesh.

"This refers to the saying, *Do as you would be done by*. The saying is derived from the Bible: 'Whatever you would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.' Through the ages many great people, including Einstein, have declared that they believe in this Rule. If you are consciously rude towards somebody, someone some day is surely going to be rude towards you perhaps when you least expect it. If you are kind to somebody, someone is going to be kind towards you when you most need it. It seems some strange law operates in our lives which arranges such things".

"What does the phrase *Golden shower* mean, Grandpa? Yesterday father was speaking to his friend about Mr. Dumbard. Mr. Dumbard, said father, was often bathed in golden showers," remembered Reena.

"The meaning is obvious! Mr. Dumbard is a lucky man. That is what father must have meant!" observed Rajesh.

The Grandpa laughed. "No, Rajesh, your father was not that kind towards Mr. Dumbard. *Golden shower* means bribe money. Mr. Dumbard must be in the habit of taking bribe. Your father was sarcastic about him. Beware of congratulating somebody for his good luck with the phrase!" Grandpa warned.

"What a strange phrase!" commented Rajesh.

"Well, its origin has nothing to do with bribe, but it refers to a secret relationship. Princess Danae, in a Greek legend, was imprisoned in an inaccessible tower by her father, the King of Argos. It was because there was a prophecy that her son shall kill the king. God Zeus changed himself into a shower of gold and entered the tower. He married the princess who gave birth to the great hero Perseus," said Grandpa Chowdhury.





LET US KNOW

Is it true that there are houses in India where cobras are given shelter?

—Jayant Mukhopadhyay, Contai.

Yes. There is a village in Sholapur district of Maharashtra named Shetpal where most of the houses have shelters for cobras. Generally the shelters are in the rafters of the ceiling. The cobras move about freely and are not known to harm people.

Is the Pope the Christ's successor? How is he chosen?

—V.S. Rajan, Mangalore.

The Pope is the successor of St. Peter. He is elected by the assembly of Cardinals.

What is the time of Homer?

—Shanti Jagirdar, Bombay.

Homer lived probably in the 8th century B.C.

Where is Ashoka Pillar situated?

—Maurice, Calcutta.

Originally the Ashoka Pillar was situated at Topra, near Meerut. Firoze Shah Tughlaq carried it to Firozabad. It is to be found there.

What is Reuter?

—Amresh, Naglapur.

The principal British and international news agency founded in 1849 by Baron Paul Julius de Reuter.

Readers are welcome to send such queries on culture, literature or general knowledge which should be of interest to others too, for brief answers from the Chandamama.



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M. Natarajan



M. Natarajan

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The winning Entry:—'Tender Cafe' & 'Yonder Stare'

PICKS FROM THE WISE

A committee is a thing which takes a week to do what one good man can do in an hour.

—Elbert Hubbard.

It takes a great man to make a good listener.

—Sir Arthur Helps.

One man with courage makes a majority.

—Andrew Jackson.

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*"The day I discovered my first pimple,
was the day I discovered Clearasil".*



I can still remember the day. And how excited I was. My elder sister's wedding was just a week away. So there I was trying on my new clothes before the mirror, when horror of horrors, I noticed something on my cheek ... a pimple. My very first pimple. My first thought was ... oh no, not now!

Just then my didi walked in and saw my face. She said "Arre pagli, everybody gets pimples at this age. I did too. And I used Clearasil. So should you." So I did. And guess what...it worked!

Now I don't need to tell you, I really enjoyed myself at the wedding.

Clearasil helps clear pimples and prevents new ones from forming.



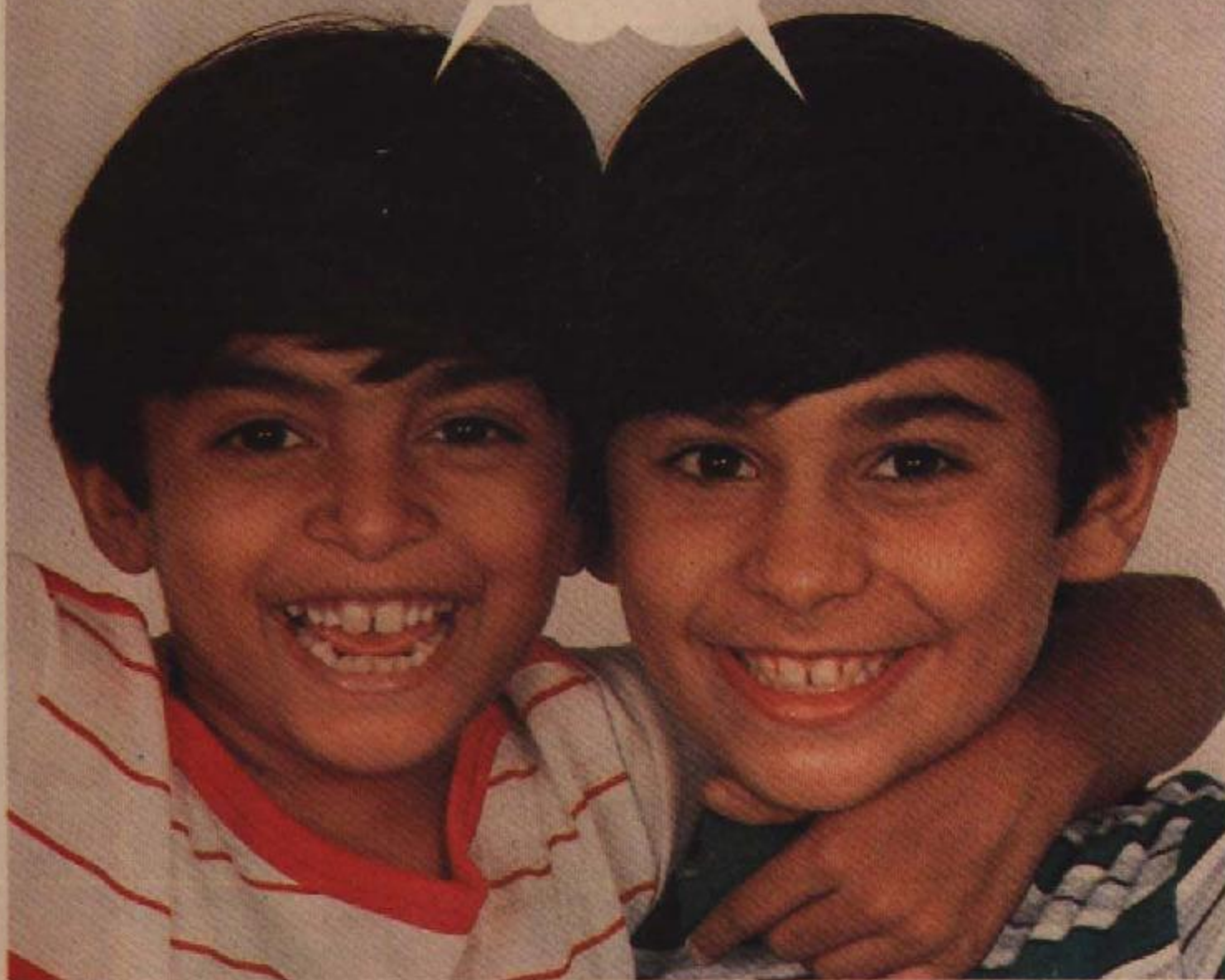
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